

# HILLSDALE COUNTY RECREATION PLAN

2021-2025



# **HILLSDALE COUNTY RECREATION PLAN**

## **Acknowledgments**

A public hearing on the plan was held on June 9, 2021 at 9 am. On June 9 at 10:00 am the Hillsdale County Park Trustees recommended that the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners adopt the plan. The plan was adopted by the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners on June 22, 2021.

### **Hillsdale County Park Trustees**

Bob Godfrey

Mike Parney

Gary Leininger

### **Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners**

Mark Wiley

Kathy Schmit

Brad Benzing

Brent Leininger

Doug Ingles

### **Hillsdale County Road Commission**

#### **Manager**

H. John Sanders

### **Special Mention**

Dave Holcomb-County IT director

Marilyn Kilpatrick-Park Trustee's Secretary

Anita Myers-County Equalization

Bill Watkins-Part Time Parks Manager

**HILLSDALE COUNTY RECREATION PLAN**

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## INTRODUCTION

### A Recreation Plan for All of Hillsdale County

Hillsdale County has developed a Recreation Plan to serve as a guideline to improve recreation facilities and develop new recreational opportunities. To that end, this document forms the basis to guide policy for implementation of improvements and new initiatives that will meet the recreational goals and interests of the Hillsdale County community. The development of this plan was guided by the Hillsdale County Parks Trustees.

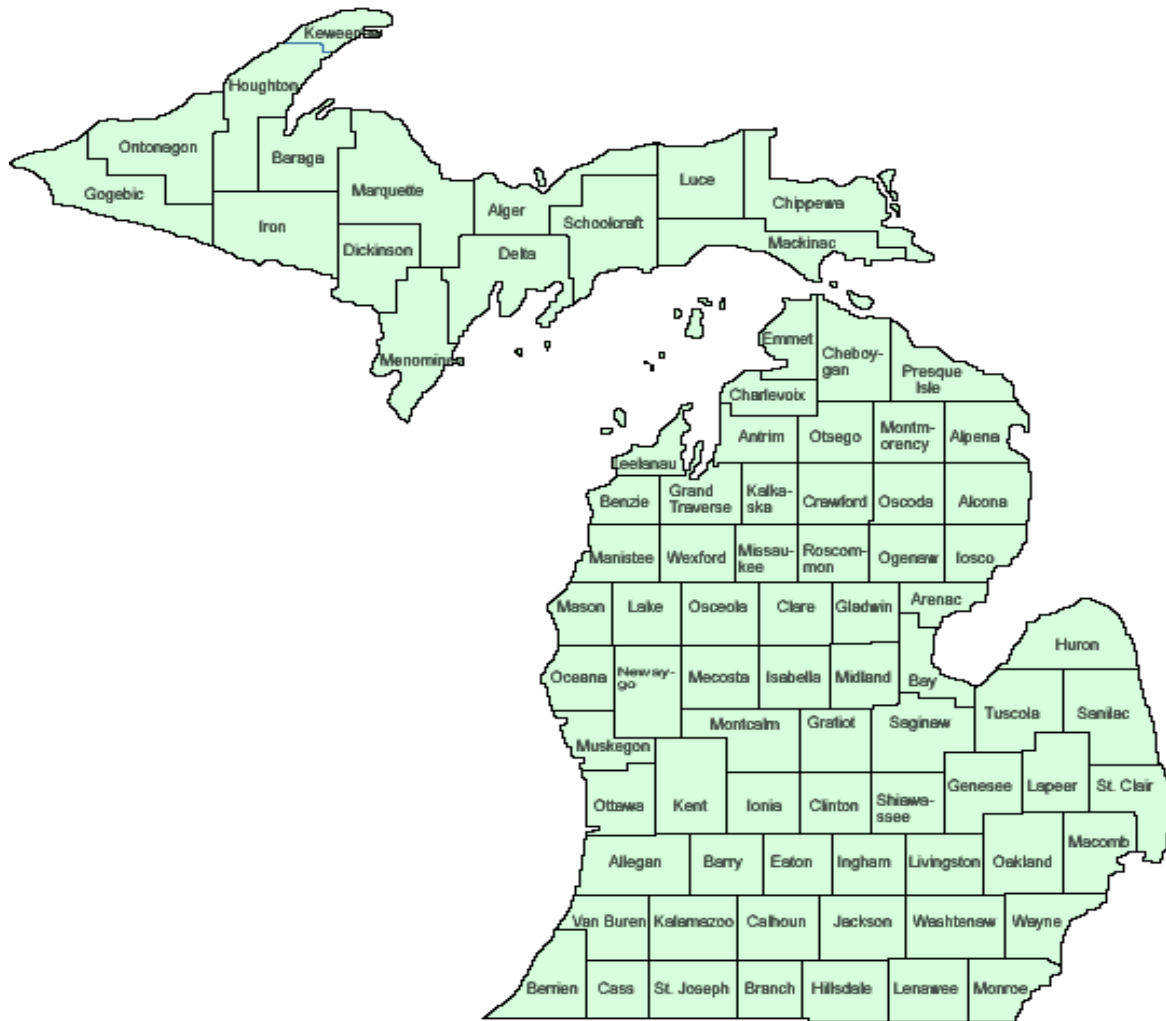


Before any recreation plan is adopted and enacted, it is first important to understand what the needs of the residents are, what recreational opportunities already exist, and what sort of projects and programs are relevant for residents based on age, ability, population, density, and the availability of recreational opportunities in neighboring communities. This plan has carefully considered input and suggestions via active communication from area residents, officials, and other community stakeholders. This input is a critical component to this plan, and together, the voices of the Hillsdale County Community have united to develop a recreation plan to enhance the quality of life for everyone.

The foundation for the development of the Hillsdale County Recreation Plan was based on the following goals:

- Involve the community in the process to develop a five-year Recreation plan,
- Inventory and map existing Hillsdale County recreational facilities,
- Build common ground among Hillsdale County stakeholders in addressing the future recreational needs and priorities of the Community,
- Enable the County to be eligible for financial assistance based upon the Recreation Plan,
- Facilitate inter-agency collaboration in establishing recreation goals, objectives, and actions, and
- Consistency with and expansion upon goals and objectives set forth in existing planning documents that deal partially or wholly with recreation.

Broadly speaking, Hillsdale County officials intend to use this plan to guide their work on all future recreational and parks projects within the county. Specifically, this plan is developed in accordance with the guidelines for Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). A five-year, MDNR-approved Recreation Plan is necessary for the governmental entities to pursue MDNR-administered grants. This Recreation Plan is written for Hillsdale County. It covers all aspects of recreation within the County.



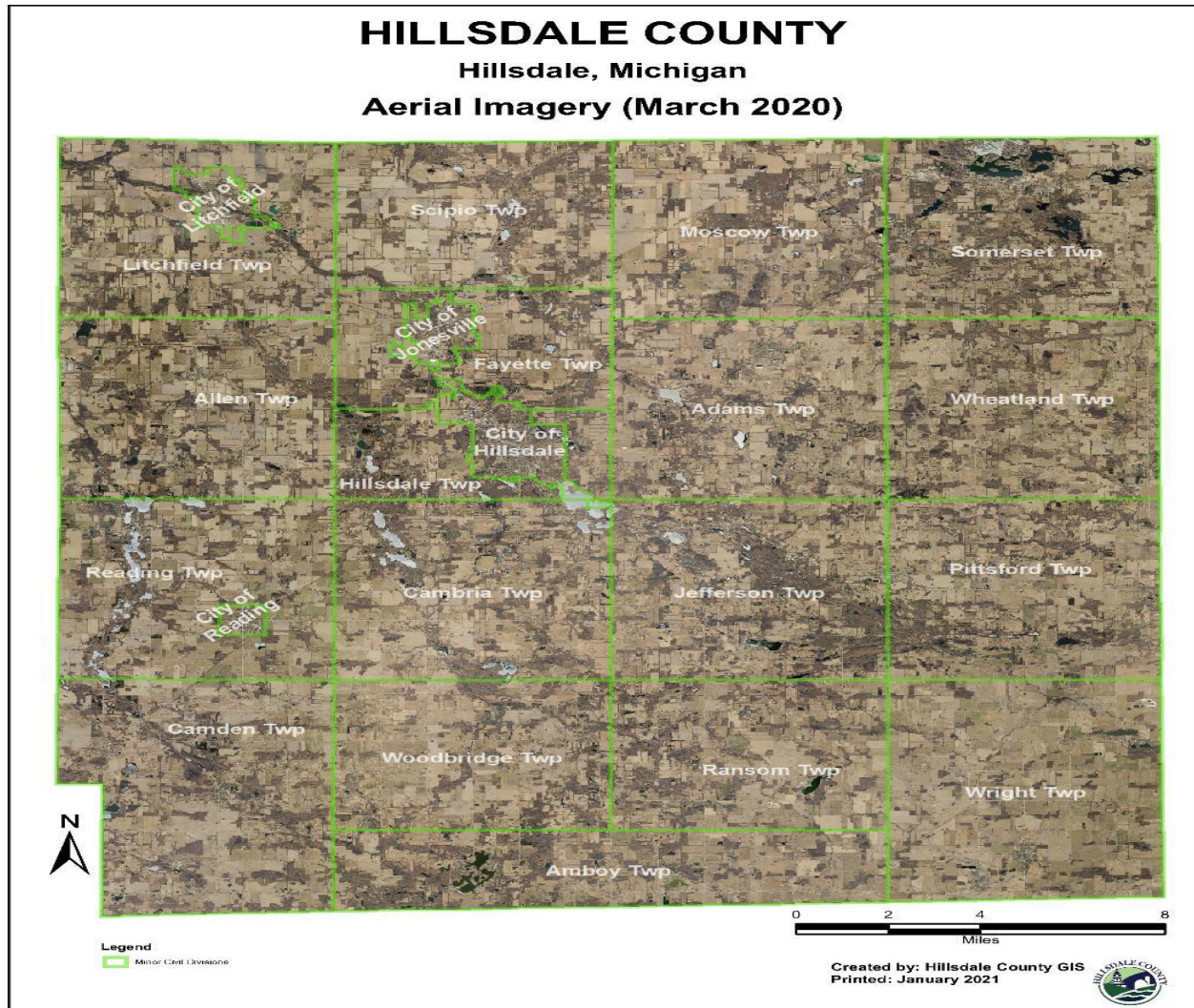
## COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

### About Hillsdale County

Hillsdale County is located in south-central Michigan, halfway between Chicago and Detroit along the Old Sauk Trail, also known as the U.S. 12 Heritage Route. Lenawee County is located to the east, Branch County to the West, Jackson and Calhoun Counties to the north, and Ohio's Williams County to the south as well as Steuben County in Indiana.

Covering an area of approximately 598 square miles, Hillsdale County is generally rural with a large agricultural and manufacturing base. The County is home to more than 388 lakes covering over 4,300 acres. The County is also known for its hiking trail which is part of the North Country trail system. An aerial image of Hillsdale County is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

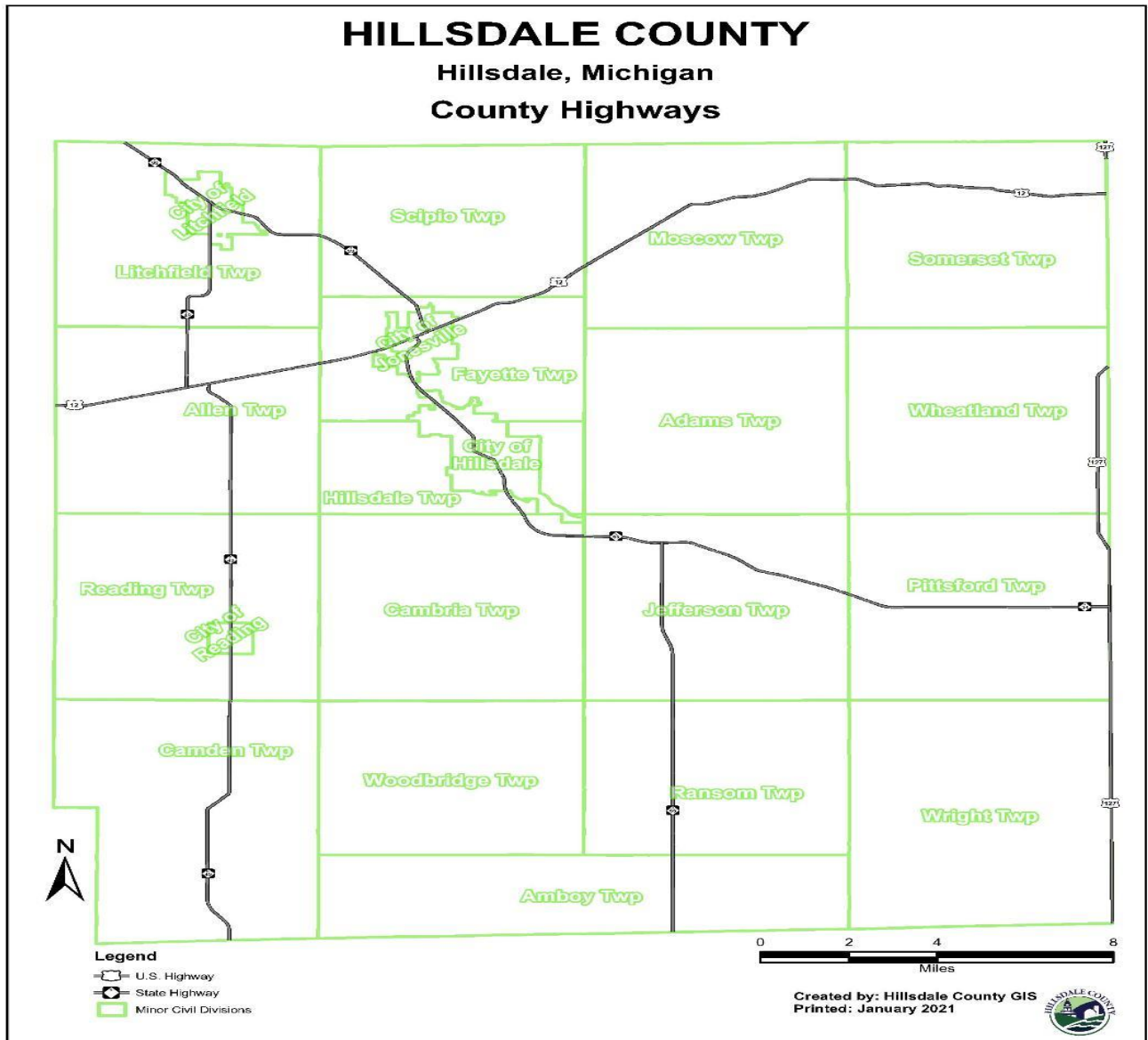


U.S. 127 is a main north south route and is located on the eastern edge of the County. M-99 is a main north south route and traverses the center of the County. U.S.-12 is a main east west route and traverses through the northern part of the County. M-34 is also a main east west route and traverses the center part of the county. M-49 is a main north south route on the west side of the county.

Politically, Hillsdale County is comprised of 18 townships, 4 cities, and 5 villages. Hillsdale is the county seat and it and Jonesville serve as the commercial center of the county. The political jurisdictions and state roads in Hillsdale County are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

## HILLSDALE COUNTY POLITICAL JURISDICTIONS



According to the 2019 American Community Survey 5 year estimates from the U.S. Census, the population of Hillsdale County is 45,605. This is an estimated decrease of 1,086 from the 2010 census. The city of Hillsdale accounts for about 18% of the population, while Somerset Township is the largest township and accounts for about 10% of the county population. The remainder is spread fairly evenly among the other jurisdictions.

According to the 2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates from the U.S. Census there are 22,122 housing units in Hillsdale County. Nearly 14,000 of these are owner occupied. About 4,000 are rentals. About 2,000 are seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. The median age of the population in Hillsdale County is 42.3 years. This is higher than Michigan's median age which is 39.8 years. Selected census data for Hillsdale County as compared to the State of Michigan is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3

SELECTED CENSUS DATA FOR COMPARISON

HILLSDALE COUNTY AND MICHIGAN

	Hillsdale County	Michigan's
Population 2015 estimate*	45605	9,986,857
Population 2010 estimate*	46,691	9,884,116
% of Population 65 & older	20.2%	17.7%
% of population under 18*	21.5%	21.5%
Median Age*	42.3	39.8
% of population with disability*	10.6%	10.2%
% bachelor's degree of higher*	17.3%	29.1%
Median household income*	\$49,622	\$57,144
Per Capita income	\$25,621	\$31,713
Average household size*	2.60	2.56
Median housing value*	\$120,100	\$154,900

\*2019 American Community Survey from the U.S. Census





## ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

### How Parks and Recreation Function in Hillsdale County

#### Park Trustees and Department Operation

Parks and Recreation functions in Hillsdale County are carried out by the Hillsdale County Parks Trustees except for the Courthouse Park. The County Parks Trustees function as an agency of Hillsdale County established pursuant to the provisions of PA 90 of 1913, as amended. The County Parks Trustees are under the general control of the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners. In accordance with PA 90 of 1913, the County Parks Trustees consist of the three members of the Hillsdale County Board of Road Commissioners. One commissioner is appointed to act as a liaison between the two bodies. The Parks Board was established in 1919. See Figure 4.

The Parks Board of Trustees are responsible for park operations and management. One part time employee is hired to maintain the parks. Hillsdale County has the authority to commit funds for park and recreation, accept grants, and purchase land on behalf of the community.

Figure 4

### HILLSDALE COUNTY PARKS ORGANIZATION CHART



### Revenue and Budgets

The Hillsdale County Parks are funded through a county general fund appropriation of \$25,000 each year. In addition, a rental house on the grounds of one park provides additional revenue of \$6,600, and rental income from the community building normally provides revenue. This community building rental revenue was lost in 2020 due to Covid. It is normally about \$14,000.

Budgets for the Hillsdale County Parks are shown below. Hillsdale County does not do any official recreation programming at this time. There are no campgrounds in any of the parks.

Figure 5 Hillsdale County Parks and Recreation Budgets		
	2020	2021
Operation & Maintenance	\$31,600	\$31,600
Capital Expenses	\$9,000	\$0

Annual budgets for the parks are adjusted during the year as needed capital improvements are noted. There is no county organized recreation programming. There is a consistent allocation of \$25,000 per year from the county with additional dollars as needed for capital projects and improvements.



The County of Hillsdale has the authority to accept grants and purchase land on behalf of the community and to commit funds for parks and recreation. There is no relationship with schools or non-profits involved in recreation.

## Role of Volunteers

The work done at the parks is with 1 part time employee hired by the Parks Trustees. There is no organized volunteer program for the parks. A former parks board trustee devotes a lot of his time to helping maintain the parks.



## RECREATION INVENTORY

Learning About Hillsdale County Parks and Natural Resources

### Hillsdale County Parks

The Hillsdale County Parks inventory was conducted in February, 2021. The ADA checklist for fishing and play areas show that most areas are not ADA compliant at this time, but will serve as a guide for

future development. All parks were visited and photographed in February, 2021.

Hillsdale County has five parks. One is a swimming beach only. Two are for picnics and playing only. One is a former rearing ponds that was deeded to the county by the State of Michigan in 1961 (Liber 365 P. 212-215). One is for picnics and honors our veterans.

#### PARKS CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

Hillsdale County has not classified its parks. I have done so, with the Park Trustees permission, using a simplified system that identifies four of them as basic recreation parks and one of them as a cross between recreation and conservation. Figure 6 gives the detailed definition for each type of park. These definitions are modified from the State of Idaho.

Figure 6

PARK CLASSIFICATION FOR HILLSDALE COUNTY

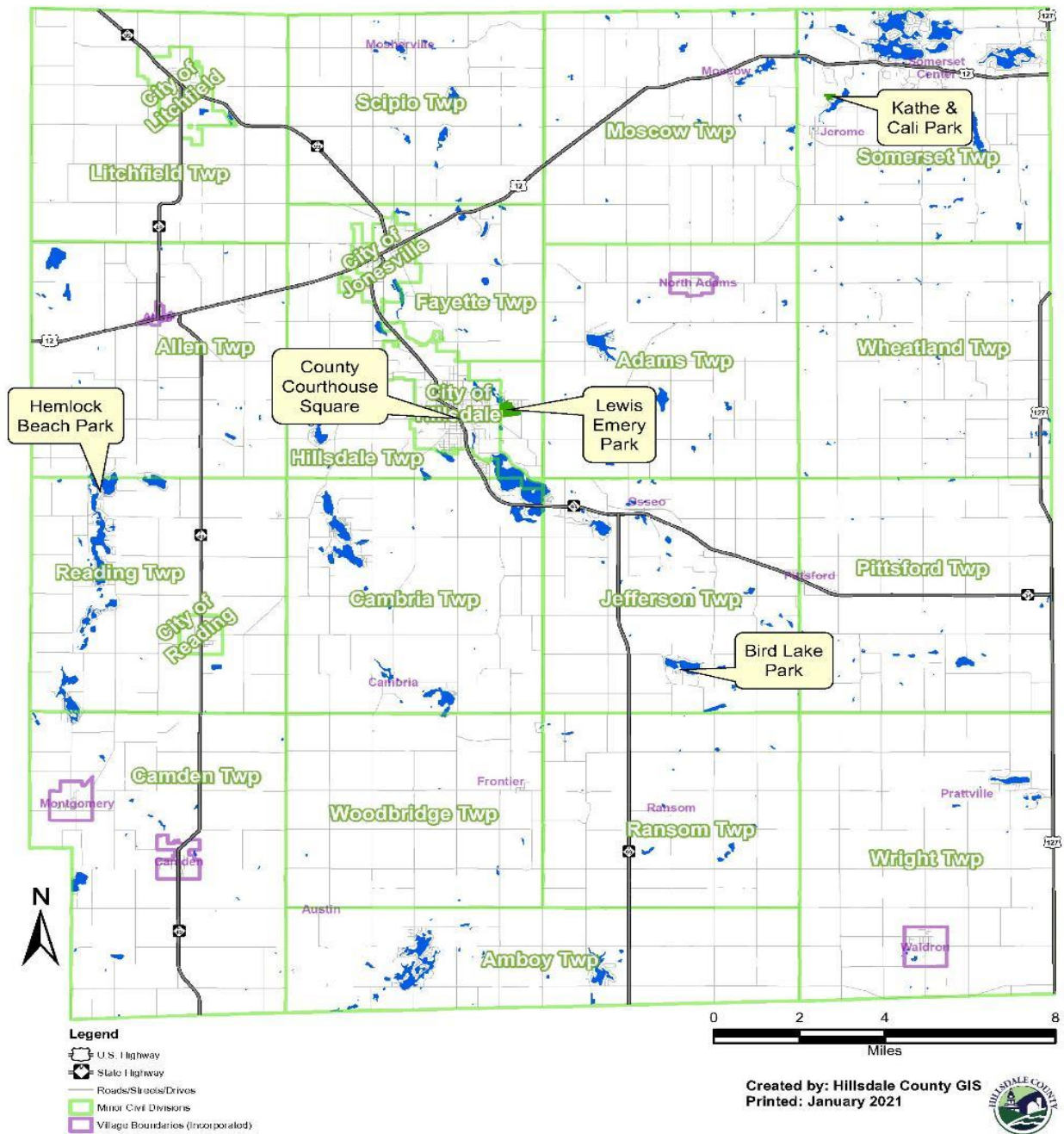
	CONSERVATION PARK	RECREATION PARK
Qualitative Value of Area Resources	Varied resource value	Low to moderate resource value
Value of Area for Active Recreation	Low to moderate	Diverse, significant, and high active recreational value
Degree of Educational Opportunity	Moderate	Moderate
Resource Area Characteristics	Although able to accommodate groups of visitors these areas are generally quiet and passive	Areas are public and dynamic. They are readily accessible, busy, and characterized by almost continuous activity.
Typical Activities	Natural park activities, plus fishing and special events	Natural and Conservation Park activities plus swimming, picnicking, group sports, playground activities
Acceptable Level of Resource Impact	Low to moderate	Moderate to high
Anticipated Degree of Human Contact	Frequent encounters with other individuals and groups	Visitors are certain to encounter many other visitors engaged in a variety of recreational and social activities
Management Objectives	Provide use and protection; establish use limits for conservation	Provide recreational opportunities; no irreparable resource damage.



# HILLSDALE COUNTY

Hillsdale, Michigan

## County Parks



## Inventory of Additional Recreation Facilities

Name of Facility	Owners	Acres	Facilities
Hillsdale & Jonesville Golf Courses	Private	80	9 & 18 hole course
Country Club Golf	Private	60	9 hole course
Sandy Beach Park	Public	64	Dock spaces, picnic tables, fishing, ice skating, swimming, bathhouse, playground, grills,
County fairgrounds	Public	70	Horseshoes, museum, grange hall, typical fairgrounds
Hillsdale College	Private	180	Athletic facilities
The Stadium	Private	1	Roller Skating
Owens Memorial Park	Public	25	Playground, picnic tables & grills, shelters, benches
Marina	Private Am. Legion	2	Clubhouse, docks, playground
Jonesville/ Hillsdale Trail system	Public		Non motorized bike and walking path

In addition every village, city, and some townships have recreational parks as well. These mostly consist of picnic tables, grills, and some playground equipment. These parks number about 17.

## Bird Lake Park

Bird Lake Park is a 60 foot by 120 foot lot used exclusively as a swimming beach. It has room to park about 4 vehicles at a time. This is the only county park that provides swimming. A bathroom is provided in the summer only with a Port-A-John toilet. It is a mini park.

Bird Lake Park

Recreation Park

60 x120 feet

Service Area-local residents

Swimming

Port-A-John in summer only







**HILLSDALE COUNTY**  
Hillsdale, Michigan  
**Bird Lake Park**



0 15 30 60  
Feet

Created by: Hillsdale County GIS  
Printed: January 2021



## Hemlock Lake Park

Hemlock Lake Park is a 1.25 acre wooded area consisting of a small pavilion, picnicking areas, and playground equipment. It has no lake frontage. It is a mini park.

Hemlock Lake Park

Recreational Park

1.25 acres

Service Area-county residents

Picnicking

Playground

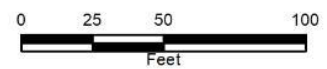




# HILLSDALE COUNTY

Hillsdale, Michigan

Hemlock Beach Park



Created by: Hillsdale County GIS  
Printed: January 2021





KATHE AND CALI PARK

Kathe and Cali Park was given to Hillsdale County in 2000. It has a nice swing set, 3 picnic tables, and a grill. Maintenance is performed by a person living next to the park. It is a neighbor-

- Kathe and Cali Park
- Conservation Park
- 9.877 acres
- Service Area-local residents
- hood park
- Playground equipment
- Picnic area

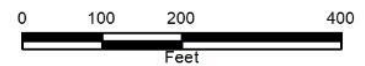




# HILLSDALE COUNTY

Hillsdale, Michigan

Kathe & Cali Park



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Printed: January 2021



## LEWIS EMERY PARK

Lewis Emery Park consists of 98 acres,

including 6 ponds ranging in size from

1 acre to 15 acres. It was originally

rearing ponds for the DNR and was given

to Hillsdale County by the State of

Michigan in 1961 when the DNR no longer grew

fingerlings there. It is the largest and

most developed of the county parks.

It has a community building of 2,100

square feet built in 1995. In the park are four covered pavilions, two sets of playground

equipment, five nature trails, a softball field, a small basketball court, picnic areas, and

superb fishing. The park is used every year by the Hillsdale Kiwanis Club to introduce

kids to fishing on Michigan's free fishing day for kids. A cross country event was held

every year for the 9 local schools and drew large crowds. It is a community park.

## Lewis Emery Park

## Conservation Park

98 acres

Service Area-southern Michigan, northern Ohio, and northern Indiana

6 fishing ponds

Community building

5 trails

2 playgrounds

### Softball and basketball





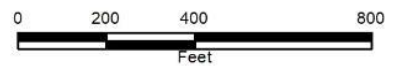




# HILLSDALE COUNTY

Hillsdale, Michigan

Lewis Emery Park



Created by: Hillsdale County GIS  
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## COURTHOUSE LAWN PARK

Courthouse Lawn Park is a beautiful park in downtown Hillsdale. It has a pavilion, fountain, veteran memorials, benches, picnic tables, and is shaded with many trees. It is a very relaxing place to go for lunch or just to relax on a busy day. It is a mini park.

Courthouse Lawn Park

Recreation park

1 acre

Service Area-local residents and anyone who visits downtown Hillsdale

Pavilion

Benches

Picnic Table

War Memorials





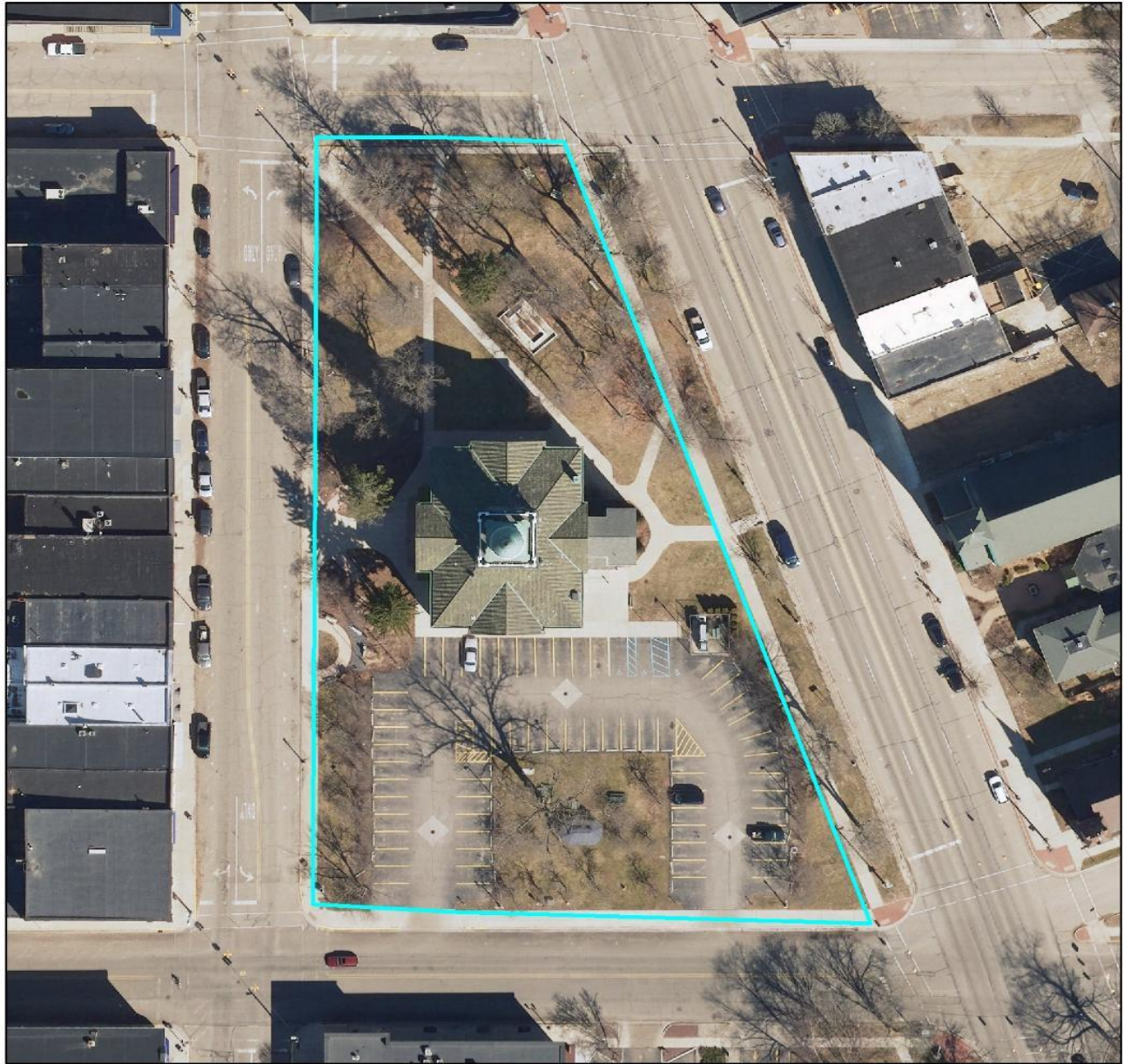




# HILLSDALE COUNTY

Hillsdale, Michigan

## Hillsdale County Courthouse Square



0 25 50 100  
Feet

Created by: Hillsdale County GIS  
Printed: January 2021





Figure 7

HILLSDALE COUNTY RECREATION INVENTORY

	Lewis Emery	Hemlock Beach	Bird Lake	Kathe-Cali	Courthouse
Ball Diamond	x				
Basketball Court	x				
Fishing Pier	x				
Pavilion	x	x			x
Playground	x	x		x	
Restroom Building	x			x	x
River or lake access	x		x		
Swimming beach			x		
Trails	x				
Acreage	98	1.25	0.17	9.877	1.0

GRANT STATUS REPORT

Hillsdale County has received a Proposal D Recreation grant through the DNR and it was used to build the Community Building at Lewis Emery Park. Hillsdale County also received a grant from the USA Land and Water Conservation Fund to develop a portion of Lewis Emery Park with a softball field, pavilion, playground, picnic tables, grills and a basketball court. The park and associated improvements, related to the two grants, are still open and operational. In addition, two Inland Fisheries grants were received about 30 years ago to dredge some of the ponds at Lewis Emery Park. Those ponds need to be dredged again. A complete history is given in the appendix A.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

Creating a park system that is safe, accessible and usable to all individuals within the community, including those with disabilities, is essential. A grading system has been developed by the American Disabilities Association (ADA) to easily identify those parks and facilities which are most and least handicap accessible and usable, based on the ADA guidelines. The accessibility grading system uses a five point system ranging from one, none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines, to five, the entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design.

An Americans with Disabilities Act(ADA) compliance assessment of Hillsdale County parks was conducted in early 2021. The assessment consisted of a visual inspection of each park in regards to access and circulation in relation to the park facilities. This includes accessible parking, paths, restrooms, activity areas, amenities, and signage.

Kathe-Cali park is a playground and picnic area and meets no ADA guidelines. Hemlock Beach park has a pavilion, which is not handicap accessible. Bird Lake park is for swimming only and is not handicap accessible for entering the water. The Courthouse Lawn park is open to handicap trails through it and to the veterans memorials, and has handicap accessible parking. Lewis Emery park is handicap accessible to the community building. It also has handicap accessible parking. The fishing docks are not handicapped accessible and that is one thing the parks commission would like to change.

Conversations were held with SPARC and Key Opportunities. SPARC is a group that provides social activities for physically and mentally impaired people. Key Opportunities is a sheltered workshop for the same clientele. Both organizations were in agreement with the goals stated in the action plan for increased accessibility for the disabled. In addition, they indicated there should be hand bars on the approaches to the new docks in Lewis Emery Park.

The Hillsdale County Planning Commission has recommended that the county adopt this recreation plan in its Master Plan update. The resolution is included in Appendix D.

Figure 8

**ADA ACCESSIBILITY GRADING SYSTEM  
FOR PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

<b>Accessibility Grade</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Hillsdale County Park</b>
1	None of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines	Bird Lake, Kathe-Cali, Hemlock Beach
2	Some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines	Lewis Emery
3	Most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines	Courthouse Lawn
4	The entire park meets accessibility guidelines	
5	The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design	

## NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

When studying parks and recreation resources in a community, it can be worthwhile to examine natural resources that may be in need of conservation or protection. In Hillsdale County the most significant resources would most likely be the rivers and lakes.

Hillsdale County is home to over 4,300 acres of lakes that present excellent opportunities for fishing, swimming, and boating. More than 70 lakes are over 10 acres in size and over a dozen of them are over 100 acres in size. The largest lake, Baw Beese, is over 400 acres in size and lies just southeast of the City of Hillsdale. In addition, Hillsdale County is the only county in Michigan without water flowing in from other areas. An abundance of spring and lake fresh water form the beginning of five rivers. The 1,200 foot elevation in Hillsdale County generates the headwaters for five major river systems;

1. The St. Joseph River begins at Baw Beese lake and flows through southern Michigan and northern Indiana all the way to Lake Michigan.
2. The Kalamazoo and Grand Rivers both travel north and west into Lake Michigan.
3. The St. Joseph River of the Maumee moves east and empties into Lake Erie.
4. The River Raisin starts in northeastern Hillsdale County and reaches Lake Erie at Monroe, Michigan.

Lost Nations State Game Area is located south of Pittsford and Osseo. This area contains delightful forests, wildflowers, ponds, and a meandering stream. A portion of the North Country Scenic Trail runs through this area. Hunting, hiking, fishing, and shooting sports can all be enjoyed in this area.

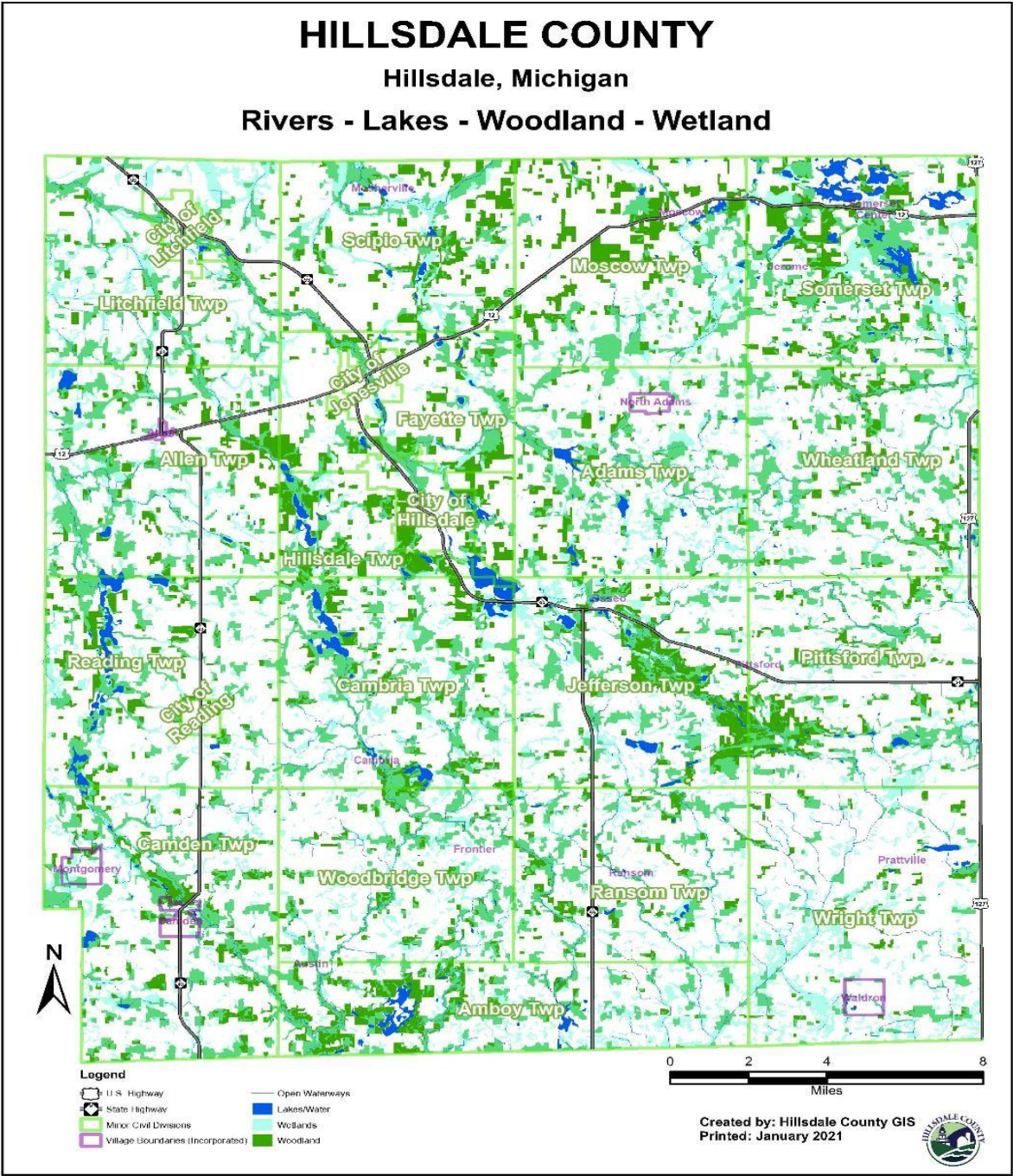
Hillsdale County is a bird watchers paradise with more than 260 species of birds. Often seen are wild turkey, swan, warbler, crane, heron, owl, and pheasant. Occasionally, birds of prey are sighted, including the osprey and bald eagle. A migratory bird sanctuary is located in Somerset State Game Area.

Fishing is also very popular in Hillsdale County with pike, perch, bluegills, crappie, muskie, bass, and catfish being plentiful. Trout and walleye are also found in some lakes. Ice fishing is popular and Tip Offs are held every year. Two free fishing weekends are held each year in the summer and in the winter at Lewis Emery Park. License fees are waived although fishing regulations still apply.



Figure 9 depicts lakes and rivers in Hillsdale County.

Figure 9



## **OTHER PARKS IN HILLSDALE COUNTY**

The Hillsdale County visitor guide lists a multitude of other parks in the county that are supported by local cities, villages, townships, and even Hillsdale College. There are 48 of these parks altogether, and many have picnic areas, playgrounds, and restroom facilities. McCourtie Park is a prominent example of such parks. Owen Memorial Park, Waterworks Park, and Sandy Beach have swimming and boat launching available in Hillsdale, and Simpson Park in Litchfield offers swimming as well.

Another recreation facility is the Hillsdale County fairgrounds which operates year round and has preserved the flavor of the old time agricultural fairs, which were very common in Michigan's past.

Another major park/recreation facility is the North Country Scenic Trail. It is a joint venture on the part of the City of Hillsdale and Jonesville, along with the townships of Fayette and Hillsdale. The trail through Hillsdale County is a part of the larger North Country trail that extends to the upper peninsula of Michigan.

The National Recreation and Parks Association recommends 1 park for every 2,281 residents. This would mean at least 20 parks should exist in Hillsdale County. There are over 48 parks in the county. Five of these are county parks, but all have playgrounds and picnic areas at a minimum. These parks are owned by cities, villages, and townships within the county.

## **COMMUNITY INPUT**

### **Listening to Hillsdale County Residents and Park Users**

One of the most important aspects of a community's recreation plan is the inclusion of the resident's opinions about how they view the future of their parks and recreation system. Hillsdale County created an online community survey to gather the information which would guide their parks and recreation program for the next 5 years. A complete tabulation of the results is available for review in Appendix B. The text below provides a description of significant results.

A second means of input was provided during the required public review period held between May 4 and June 9, 2021, and concluding with the public meeting on June 9, 2021.

### **COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY PROCESS**

Hillsdale County developed an online survey that was made available from Survey Monkey.

The public was made aware of this survey in various ways:

1. An email with a link to the survey was sent to County officials, township officials, and staff.
2. A link to the survey was placed on the County's web page.
3. An article was written in the local newspaper about the survey with the link included.
4. The local radio station repeatedly mentioned the story about the survey and included the link
5. The survey link was also placed on other web pages such as cities and the Economic Development Partnership.

### **COMMUNITY INPUT RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

Responses were gathered from about 196 people.

## GOALS

### Guiding Principles

Developing goals and objectives is an important part of the recreation planning process. The overall goal of a parks and recreation department is to provide recreation opportunities for the community and/or region it serves. More specific goals must be based on the demographic characteristics of the population served, the physical and environmental characteristics, and the input of the community.

Hillsdale County's recreational facilities bring people together and add a sense of civic pride and belonging. Maintaining and updating park and recreational facilities will preserve the value and popularity of the County's park system. Demographic and lifestyle changes will lead to new demands such as for more accessible walking trails, better fishing opportunities, more handicap accessible opportunities, and more up to date playground equipment.

Goals are the broadest level. They are overreaching and general. Objectives carry out the purpose of the goal. The Action Program is the last level and it identifies specific projects and programs. The Action Program can include organizational, staffing, programming, public information, and operation and maintenance actions. Hillsdale County formulated the following goals and objectives based upon the characteristics of the overall community, the input received at the community input sessions, and the survey.

**Goal 1 – Promote and provide diverse recreational opportunities to satisfy all age groups and levels of ability. These recreational opportunities shall inspire personal growth, healthy lifestyles, and a sense of community.**

Objective: Provide recreational opportunities for all people, including those with disabilities.

Objective: Add new amenities to Hillsdale County park facilities based upon community input.



**Goal 2 – Develop sustainable opportunities that take advantage of the lakes and woodlands in Hillsdale County.**

Objective: Encourage environmental education opportunities in Hillsdale County Parks.

**Goal 3 – Retain public land for future generations.**

Objective: Retain existing parkland to meet the recreational needs of the community.

**Goal 4 – Promote and enhance the financial stability of Hillsdale County Parks.**

**Goal 5 – Create community awareness of Hillsdale County recreational opportunities and promote them to citizens.**

Objective: Use the county website and others to communicate with the public about Hillsdale County park facilities and events.

Objective: Consider other opportunities for advertising and promotion.

**Goal 6 – Maintain and improve existing facilities to meet the needs of park users.**

Objective: Upgrade park facilities where needed.

Objective: Maintain the viability of the 6 ponds at Lewis Emery for fishing.

## **ACTION PLAN**

### **Planning for improvements**

With goals and objectives in place, Hillsdale County was able to develop a 5-year action program to work toward accomplishing the goals and objectives. The Action Program details the direction the community wishes to take over the next five years in order to maintain and improve the quality and diversity of area parks and recreation opportunities.

Potential projects were assigned a priority of 1 through 14 with 1 being most important and 14 being least important. Each action item relates to one or more of the numbered goals from the previous section. Potential capital improvements described in this Plan have been established not only to provide a framework for decision makers but also to enable the County to apply for grant funding for these proposed projects.

The project list is not a fixed element and it is neither all inclusive nor exclusive. The schedule reflects the results of the input received from the on-line survey, County staff, and the community open house. Future circumstances, especially availability of funding, may change priorities or require re-prioritization of items.

The Action Plan is shown in the table below.

### **Financing potential improvements**

Funding for parks and recreation capital improvements can come from a range of local, state, and federal programs. Grant funding is available for parks and recreation projects. However, applicants need to target potential funding agencies and programs carefully so as to meet the specific criteria required. Appendix C contains a current listing of programs and agencies that can provide funding for parks and recreation projects.

## HILLSDALE COUNTY PARKS ACTION ITEMS 2021-2025

Priority	Action Item	Purpose	Location	Relates to Goal
1	Aluminum Docks handicap accessible	Infrastructure up-grade, fishing access	Lewis Emery	1,6
2	Dredge ponds 1,4 anti-erosion shores	Improve fishing	Lewis Emery	1,6
10	Signage for bathrooms	Park Users	Lewis Emery	6
6	Handicap accessible water entrance Rebuild sea wall	Infrastructure Upgrade	Bird Lake	1,6
3	Dredge ponds 5,6 anti erosion shores	Improve fishing	Lewis Emery	1,6
8	More security cameras	Safety	Lewis Emery	6
9	Picnic tables, grills, benches	Functionality	All parks	6
5	Rebuild Fountain	Improve user experience	Courthouse lawn	6
11	Dredge ponds 2,3	Improve fishing	Lewis Emery	1,6
12	Rebuild waterfall	Infrastructure	Lewis Emery	6
4	Upgrade trails, make handicap accessible	Recreation	Lewis Emery	1,2
7	Parking, trails	Recreation, accessibility	Kathe-Cali	1,3,6
13	Refurbish playground, add side-walks	Recreation, accessibility	Hemlock Beach	1,6
14	Run city water	Infrastructure upgrade	Lewis Emery	6



## **SUMMARY OF THE PLANNING PROCESS & ADOPTION**

### **A Plan supported by the Community**

In its effort to provide quality recreational opportunities for its citizens, Hillsdale County has developed this Parks and Recreational Master Plan as a tool to guide the development of community park and recreational facilities and locations over the next five years. This plan is an effort by the local government officials in Hillsdale County to establish recreational goals and objectives for the community. The plan will also provide the County with eligibility for grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to assist the community in reaching its recreational goals.

Hillsdale County contracted with Bruce Caswell, a local grant writer, to assist them with the completion of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Bruce worked with the Hillsdale County staff and Parks Trustees through the course of the plan and would like to thank them for their help.

Data was collected about the County including maps, demographics, park information and an inventory of existing facilities. The data was collected from county staff, field observations, various websites, and other relevant planning documents. The National Recreation and Parks Association indicates that Hillsdale County should have 9.9 acres of park for every 1,000 residents or 1 park for every 2,281 residents. While the county park system meets neither of these criteria currently, the second criteria is easily met if all public parks in the county are counted.

Community input was collected via an on-line survey conducted in the winter of 2021. Based on community input and existing information, Hillsdale County developed goals and objectives for parks and recreation. Then, action plan items were written that would work toward accomplishing the goals and objectives.

The consultant completed the draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan document and it was made available for review on the Hillsdale County website and at the Hillsdale County Road Commission office, as well as the County Clerk's office for at least 30 days beginning on May 4, 2021. The reviewing opportunity was advertised in the Hillsdale Tip Off guide. The final opportunity for community input occurred at the advertised public meeting held prior to the adoption of the plan. The meeting was held on June 9, 2021 at the Hillsdale County Road Commission offices at 1919 Hudson Rd. Hillsdale, Mi.

On June 9, 2021 the Hillsdale County Parks Trustees passed a resolution recommending that the County formally adopt the plan. On June 22, 2021 the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution adopting the recreation plan. Copies of the advertisements and resolutions are included in Appendix D.

## Appendix A – Recreation Grant History

Year	Grant	Amount	Park
1990	Inland Fisheries Pond 4 dredging Warrant number 47862087	\$20,000	Lewis Emery
1992	Inland Fisheries Pond 5 dredging	\$20,000	Lewis Emery
1994	Proposal D Recreation Construct a new Community Building Grant number BF-062	\$175,500	Lewis Emery
1989	Nick Smith Allocation Rebuild draw down stacks for the ponds	\$30,000	Lewis Emery
1979	Land and Water Conservation Build pit restroom, 10 picnic tables, 5 grills, softball field, playground, trail LWCF 26-01060M3	\$10,000	Lewis Emery
1988	Local Money Pond 1 dredging	\$5,000	Lewis Emery

**The following grants were all awarded by the Hillsdale County Community Foundation**

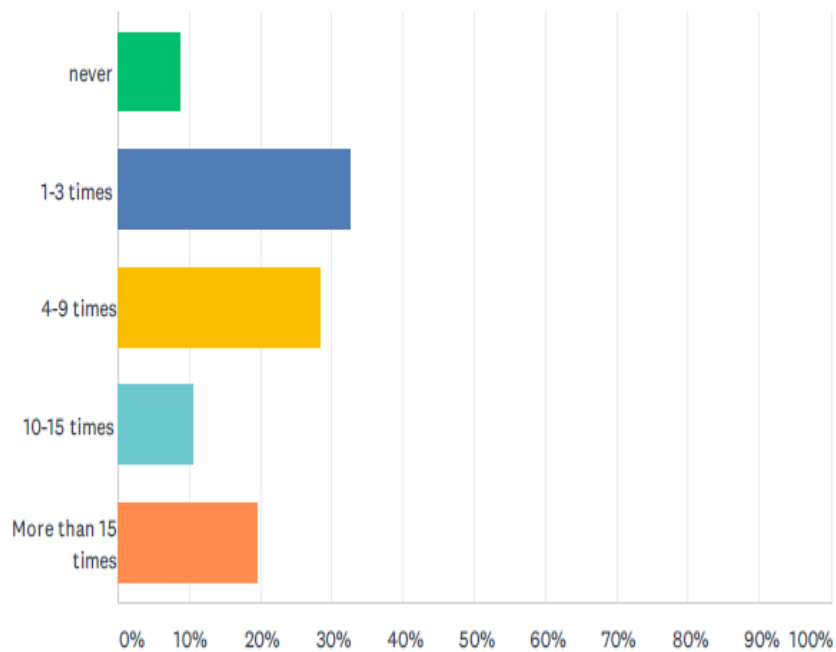
1994	Community Building Part of local match	\$7,000	Lewis Emery
1996	Improvements Playground, swing slides, 12 picnic tables, 16 grills	\$6,676	Lewis Emery
2003	Gazebo/shelter	\$10,834	Lewis Emery
2007	Flotation markers	\$700	Bird Lake

## Appendix B – Online Survey Results



## Q1 How many times have you or your family used a Hillsdale County park in the past year?

Answered: 193 Skipped: 1



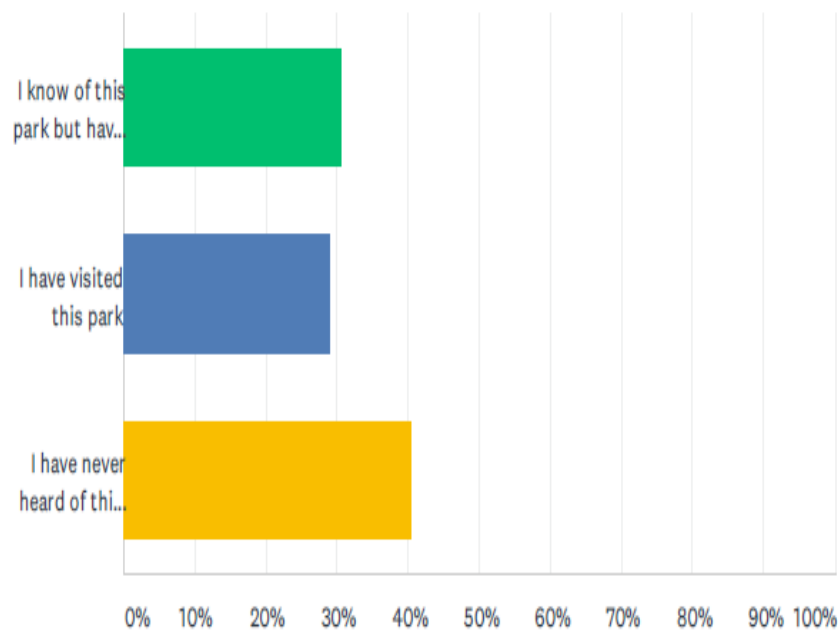
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
never	8.81%	17
1-3 times	32.64%	63
4-9 times	28.50%	55
10-15 times	10.36%	20
More than 15 times	19.69%	38
TOTAL		193

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Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

Q2 Please indicate your familiarity with the Hillsdale County Bird Lake Park.

Answered: 193 Skipped: 1

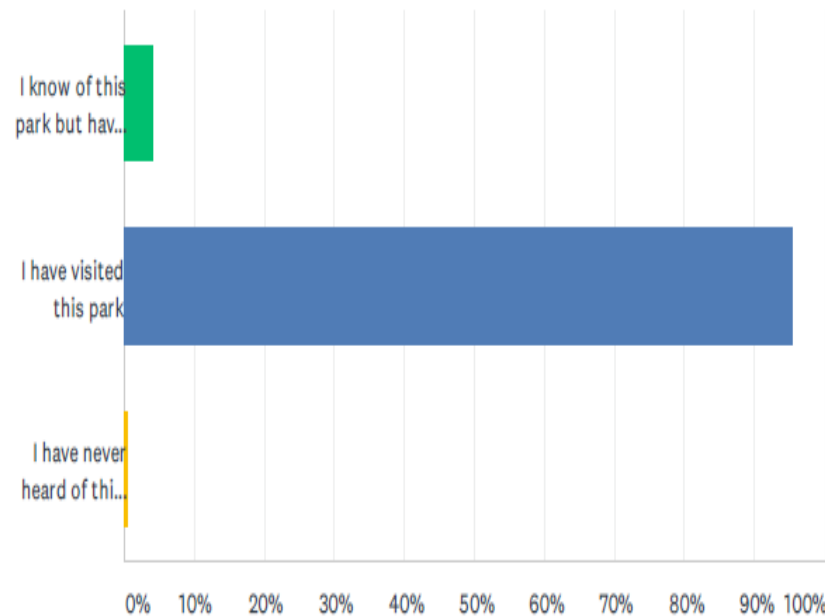


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I know of this park but have not visited it	30.57%	59
I have visited this park	29.02%	56
I have never heard of this park	40.41%	78
TOTAL		193

Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

Q3 Please indicate your familiarity with the Hillsdale County Lewis Emery Park.

Answered: 194 Skipped: 0

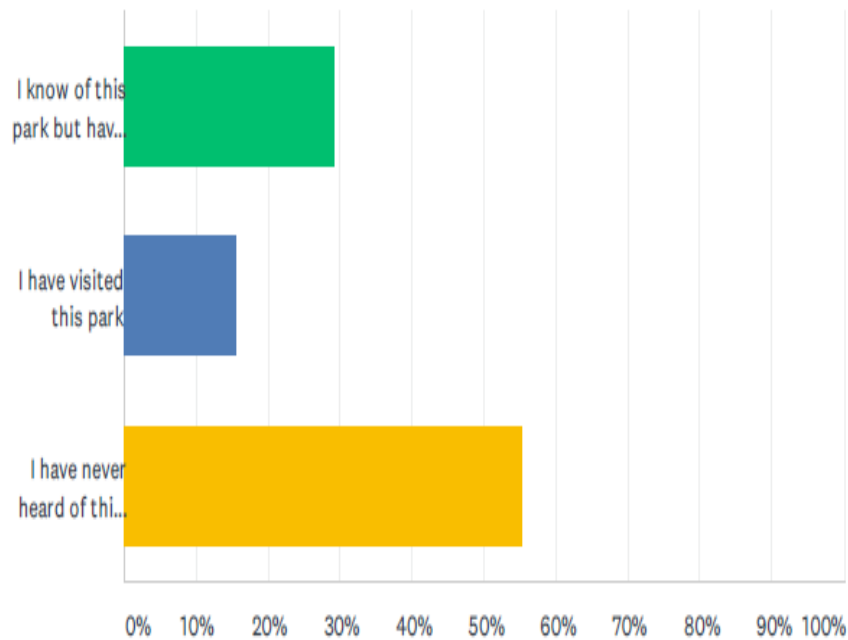


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I know of this park but have not visited it	4.12%	8
I have visited this park	95.36%	185
I have never heard of this park	0.52%	1
TOTAL		194

# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q4 Please indicate your familiarity with the Hillsdale County Hemlock Park.

Answered: 194 Skipped: 0



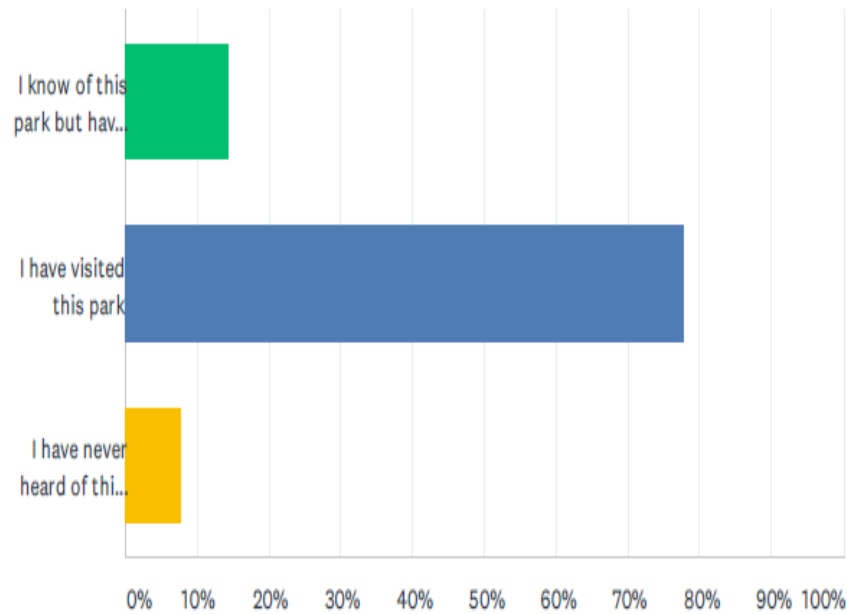
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I know of this park but have not visited it.	29.38%	57
I have visited this park	15.46%	30
I have never heard of this park	55.15%	107
TOTAL		194



# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q5 Please indicate your familiarity with the Hillsdale Courthouse Grounds Park.

Answered: 194 Skipped: 0

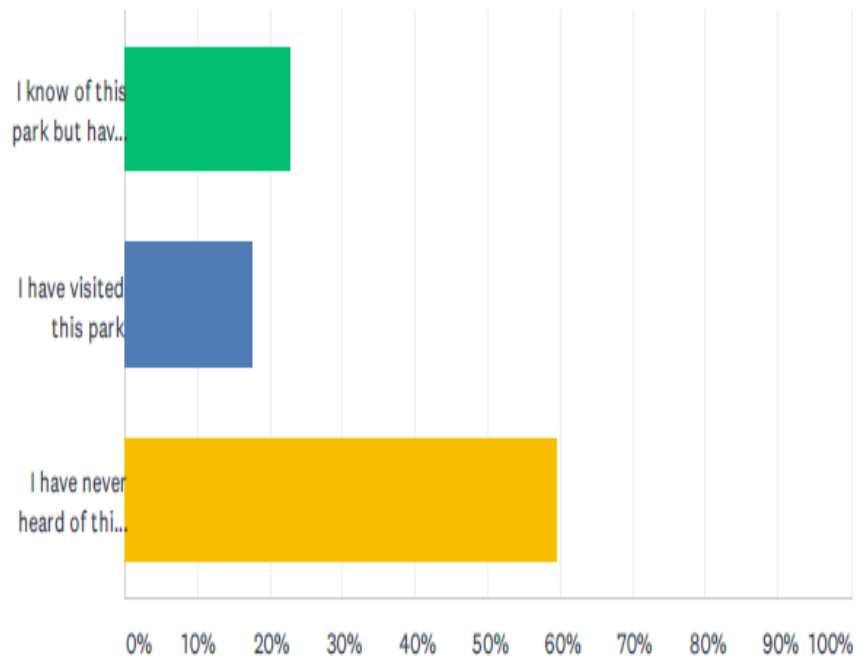


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I know of this park but have not visited it	14.43%	28
I have visited this park	77.84%	151
I have never heard of this park	7.73%	15
TOTAL		194

## Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

### Q6 Please indicate your familiarity with the Hillsdale County Kathe-Cali Park.

Answered: 193 Skipped: 1

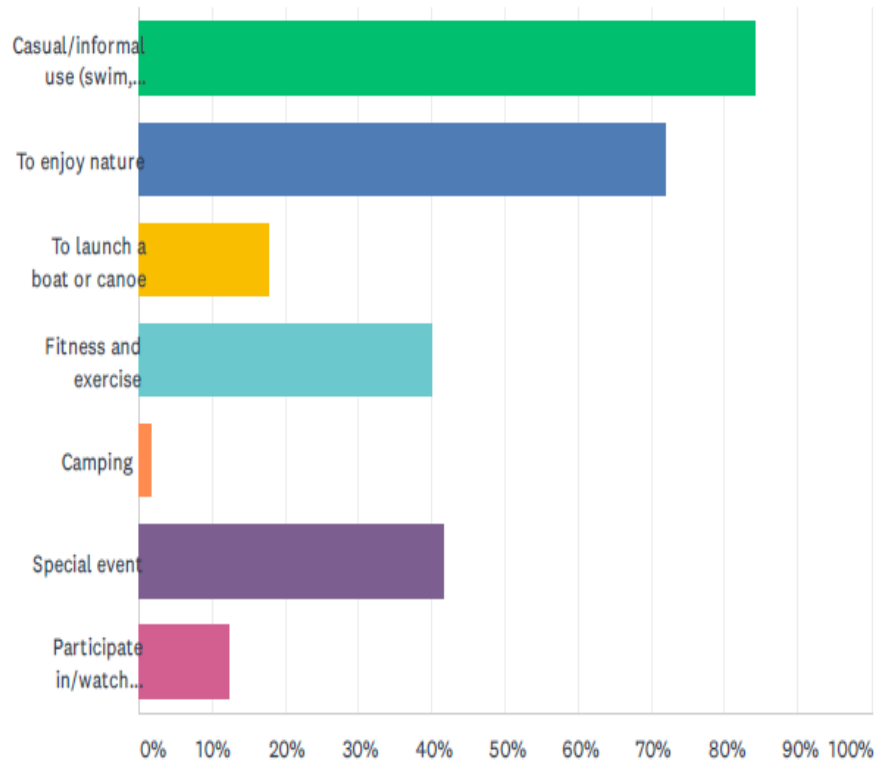


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I know of this park but have not visited it	22.80%	44
I have visited this park	17.62%	34
I have never heard of this park	59.59%	115
TOTAL		193

## Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

### Q7 Why do you and/or your family visit Hillsdale County parks?

Answered: 185 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Casual/informal use (swim, picnic, playground)	84.32%	156
To enjoy nature	71.89%	133
To launch a boat or canoe	17.84%	33
Fitness and exercise	40.00%	74
Camping	1.62%	3
Special event	41.62%	77
Participate in/watch athletic events	12.43%	23
Total Respondents: 185		

Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

**Q8 What additional facilities/amenities would you like to see added to Hillsdale County parks?**

Answered: 129 Skipped: 65

1. Trash cans and bathrooms.
2. More swim areas.
3. Just keeping them clean and well-maintained.
4. Bathrooms.
5. Updated playgrounds, benches for seating.
6. I would like to buy Hemlock park land.
7. Public pool, dog park.
8. Walking paths to see the whole park.
9. Wheelchair accessible swings and accessible ramps.
10. Bathrooms. Updated playground.
11. Ice skating, tennis.
12. Pool.
13. Amenities for handicapped children in wheelchairs or not.
14. More pavilions.
15. Splash pad, skateboard area, hiking trails.
16. Dog park, skateboard park.
17. Dog park.
18. Playground equipment, restrooms.
19. Identified parking around the park-thinking of Lewis Emery.
20. More things for kids. Fun playgrounds or other kid-friendly things.
21. Hiking trails.
22. A fitness area.
23. Dog park.
24. Volleyball courts.



25. Drinking fountains.
26. Nice bathroom facilities.
27. Public pool.
28. Usable, unlocked bathroom facilities.
29. Having shaded areas, benches, tables, and good clean restrooms helps with a variety of activities/functions.
30. Dog walk, skate park.
31. Disc golf, basketball court, Gazebo or other covered structure.
32. Better restroom.
33. Perhaps more info about the group of parks, I only knew of two.
34. Food truck roundup event, volunteer park cleanup events, Hillsdale College volunteer interpretive hikes.
35. Something family oriented.
36. Flowers planted.
37. Bathroom.
38. More disc golf.
39. Another disc golf course would be great. Fully functional bathrooms at some of the bigger parks.
40. Pickle ball courts please.
41. Canoe/kayak rentals.
42. Grounds need cleaned. Would like some seating by the lake to enjoy.
43. Fishing, skate/bike park playgrounds.
44. Pickle ball courts. 5 or 6 courts to start with. You would be amazed how much use they would get.
45. More affordable rentals and pavilions regular bathrooms. Going to parks without some type of bathrooms shortens time spent at the parks.
46. Updated play area for kids.
47. More playground equipment.
48. More picnic tables. Stop cutting down trees.
49. A park more designed for younger children that isn't so close to the water.
50. I would love to see the rearing ponds put back into service again. It is a beautiful park to take the kids and teach them about wildlife and nature.

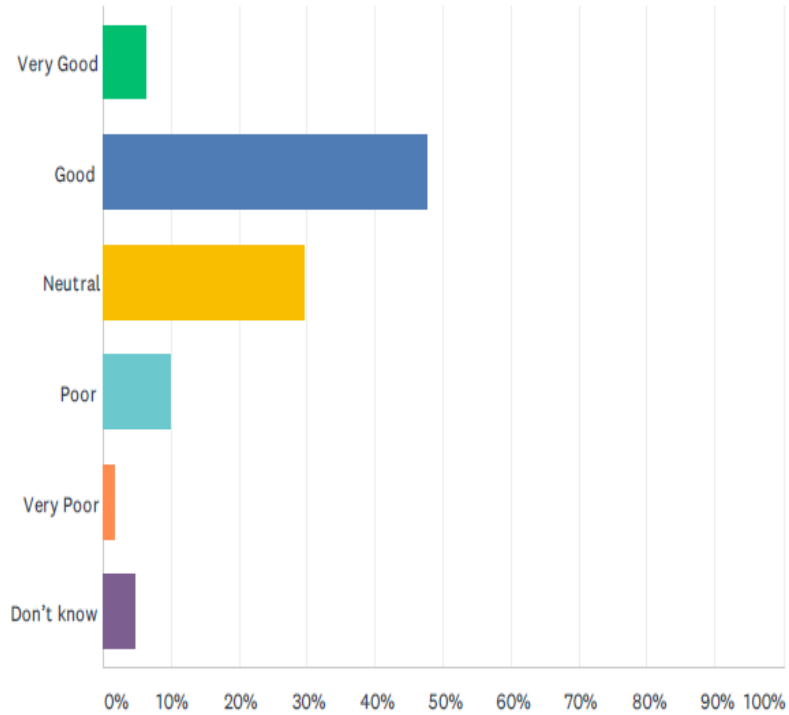
51. Bathrooms.
52. A water pad and dog park.
53. Good quality benches and tables.
54. Ball fields upgraded.
55. More things for kids to play on.
56. A splash pad for the people in the summer. Updated playground equipment.
57. More accessible fishing at Lewis Emery park. Fix docks, clean weeds/brush. It's a beautiful place but it needs a little more attention and my family and I would love to volunteer to help, as we go there multiple times a week.
58. Horse shoe pits/cement corn hole boards.
59. More educational signs. More advertising.
60. Little kid activities.
61. Public restrooms.
62. Pickle ball courts.
63. Need pickle ball courts in the county.
64. Pickle ball courts.
65. Lewis Emery Park has been very busy and needs the upper trail covered with wood chips. Lots of trees and brush need trimmed. Picnic tables need painting and docks repaired. The park has been a must for people during the pandemic. The park does not require lots of new amenities, it just needs a good face lift.
66. Clean bathrooms.
67. More walk-able trails.
68. More picnic shelters.
69. 8 pickle ball courts.
70. Splash pad.
71. Proper bathrooms.
72. Benches.
73. More bike trails.
74. Restrooms.

75. Better restrooms and more parking.
76. Trail systems. Porta-Johns cleaned on a more frequent basis.
77. Covered pavilions at all parks.
78. Restrooms and nice playground equipment.
79. Playground and picnic equipment.
80. I love the woodsy parks and the rearing ponds with platforms.
81. I love the walking trails-gives people working in town somewhere outdoors to enjoy during lunch or break time.
82. Bathrooms.
83. Bathrooms.
84. More playgrounds and picnic areas.
85. Camp sites for campers.
86. More pavilions and bathrooms.
87. Would like a dog friendly area for pets to play.
88. Nature trails, additional picnic facilities, play grounds.
89. Open Bird Lake Beach back up...restrooms, playgrounds, food trucks.
90. Special events like music and performers.
91. Bathrooms.
92. Rest rooms, picnic tables, grills, play ground equipment.
93. Landscaping, put cap stones on the entrance sign at Lewis Emery..it looks unfinished and will protect the mortar holding the pillars together. Update the fishing docks on the breeding ponds with poly wood.
94. Improve cleanliness. Deal with geese and trash.
95. I would like to see more grills and seating areas. Also some kind of skate park added to one of the parks. Adding some kind of bike trails would be great as well. Also more fishing spots. I have many more ideas.
96. Good outdoor toilets.

# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q9 Please evaluate the following aspects of Hillsdale County Parks: Variety of Facilities/amenities.

Answered: 189 Skipped: 5

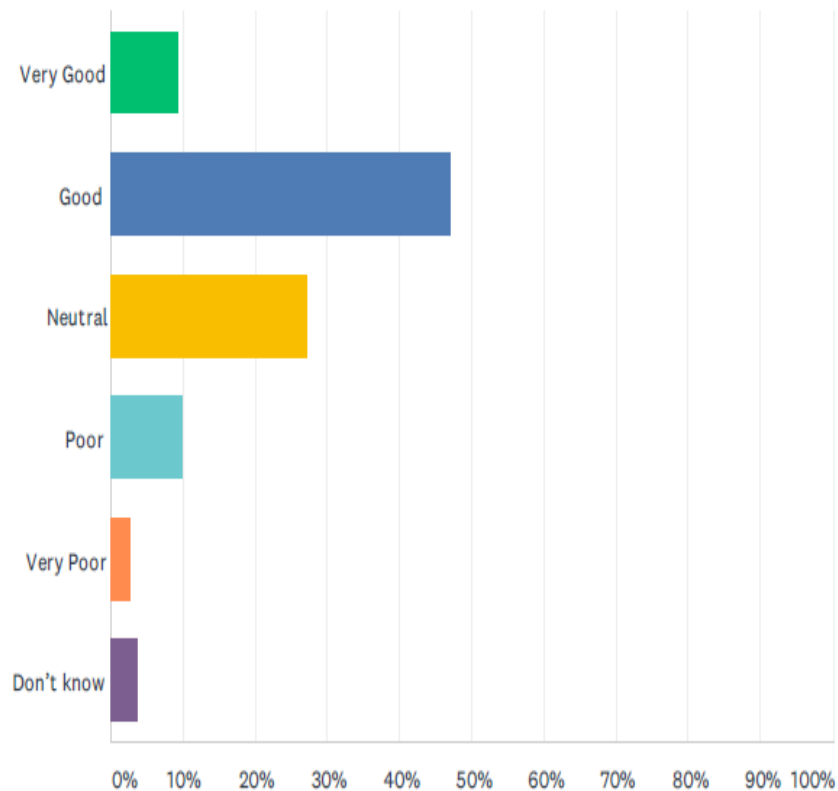


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Good	6.35%	12
Good	47.62%	90
Neutral	29.63%	56
Poor	10.05%	19
Very Poor	1.59%	3
Don't know	4.76%	9
TOTAL		189



## Q10 Please evaluate the following aspects of Hillsdale County Parks: Maintenance and Appearance

Answered: 191 Skipped: 3

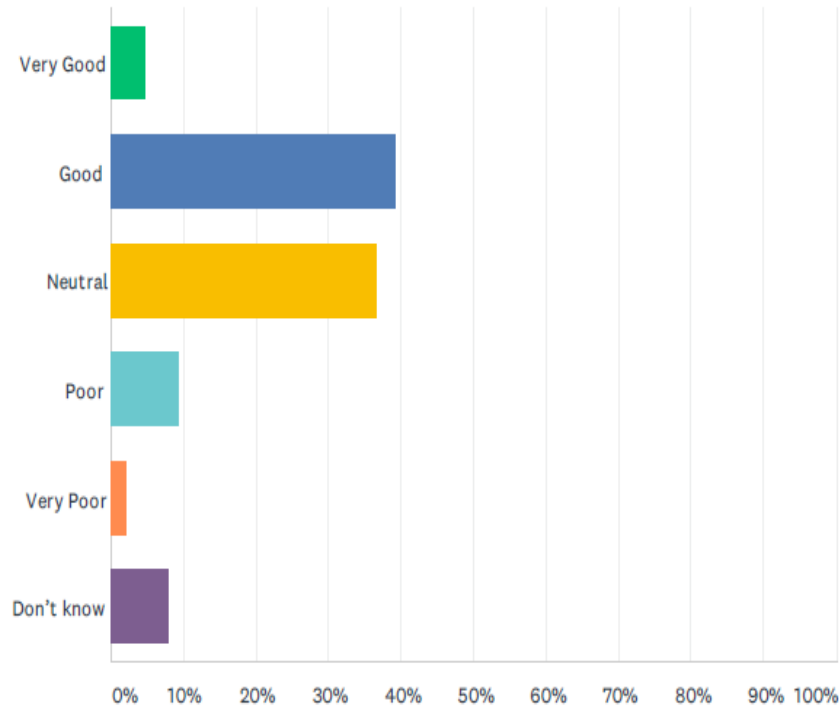


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Good	9.42%	18
Good	47.12%	90
Neutral	27.23%	52
Poor	9.95%	19
Very Poor	2.62%	5
Don't know	3.66%	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>191</b>

# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q11 Please evaluate the following aspects of Hillsdale County Parks: Safety and Security

Answered: 191 Skipped: 3

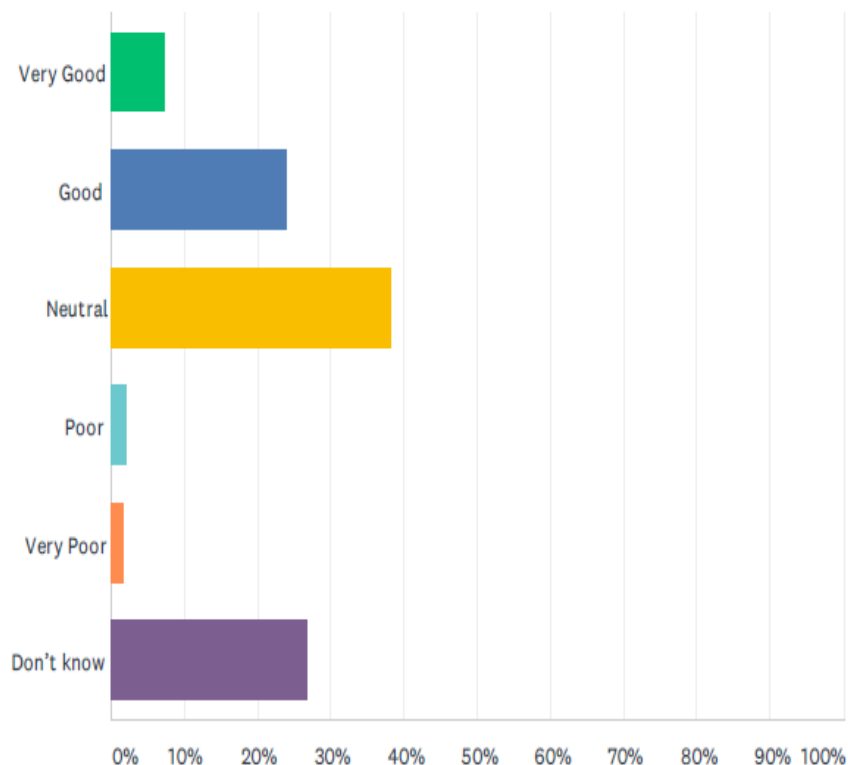


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Good	4.71%	9
Good	39.27%	75
Neutral	36.65%	70
Poor	9.42%	18
Very Poor	2.09%	4
Don't know	7.85%	15
TOTAL		191

# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q12 Please evaluate the following aspects of Hillsdale County Parks: Quality/Friendliness of Staff

Answered: 191 Skipped: 3

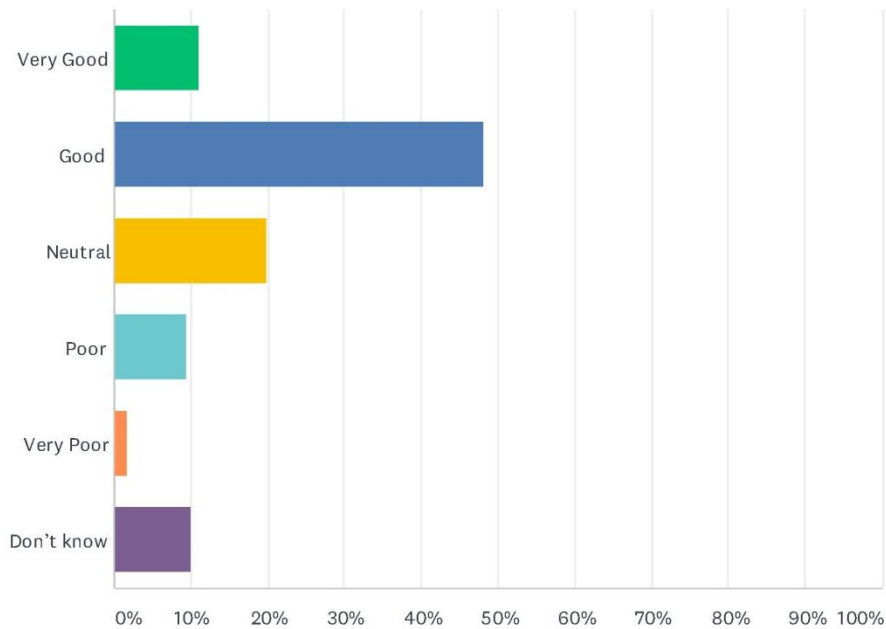


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Good	7.33%	14
Good	24.08%	46
Neutral	38.22%	73
Poor	2.09%	4
Very Poor	1.57%	3
Don't know	26.70%	51
TOTAL		191

Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

Q13 Please evaluate the following aspects of Hillsdale County Parks:  
Water Accessibility (where applicable)

Answered: 191 Skipped: 3



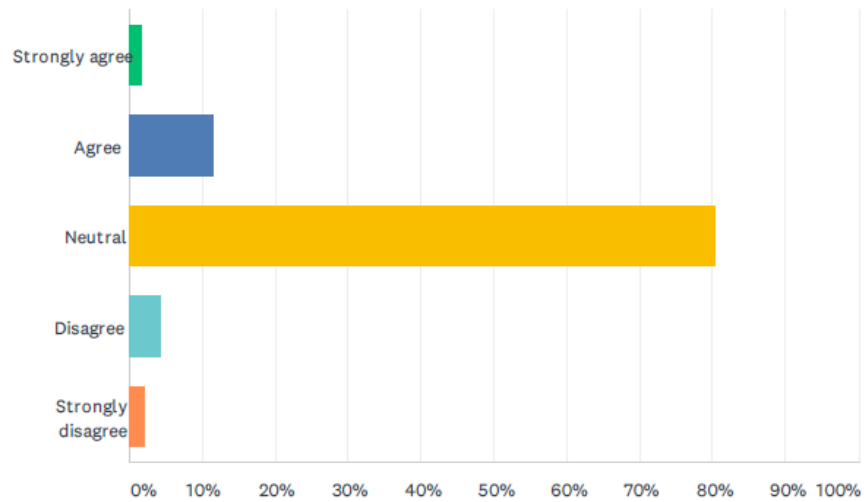
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Good	10.99%	21
Good	48.17%	92
Neutral	19.90%	38
Poor	9.42%	18
Very Poor	1.57%	3
Don't know	9.95%	19
TOTAL		191



# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q14 Do you feel the Bird Lake Park area is satisfactory?

Answered: 184 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	1.63%	3
Agree	11.41%	21
Neutral	80.43%	148
Disagree	4.35%	8
Strongly disagree	2.17%	4
TOTAL		184

**Q15 Please give any additional feedback for Bird Lake Park you may have.**

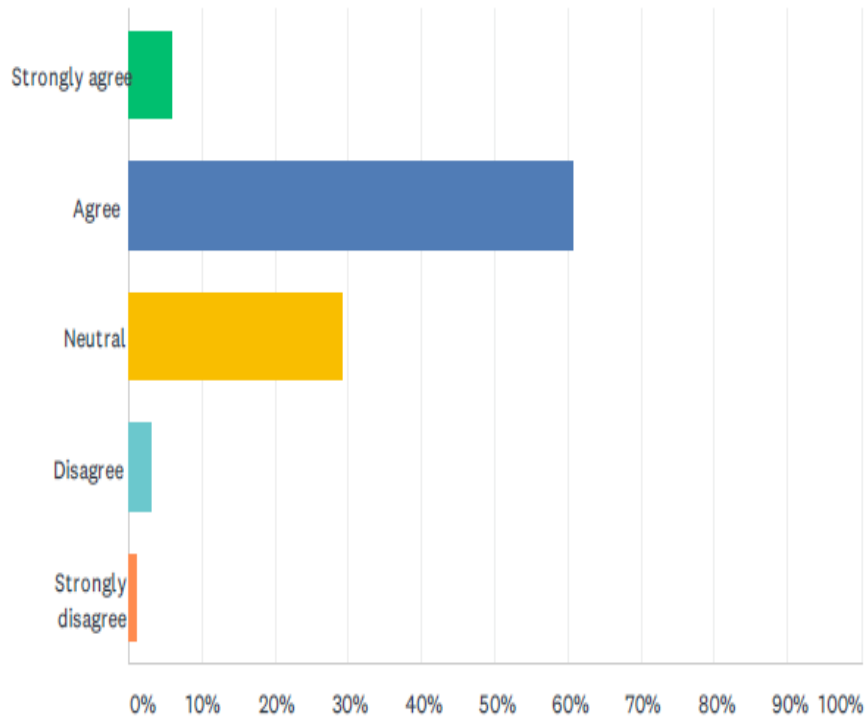
Answered: 77 Skipped: 117

1. Steps need to be repaired or replaced other than that nice.
2. I think it could be a really nice family area if it were developed a little.
3. Not much parking.
4. Needs some restoring/updating.
5. I enjoy going there to swim with my family.
6. Bird Lake Park provides residents a location for free swimming and fun in the county. We and family members have been swimming there many times and created many fond memories.
7. Weekend people take up parking for swimming.
8. Increase parking spaces and paint them.
9. Fix the sea wall.
10. I have been swimming at Bird Lake since I was a child. Need to bring in more sand for the water(has become extremely deep), bring back the buoys, and picnic tables. More parking without old ladies complaining.
11. Would like to see the park more kid friendly

Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey  
Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q16 Do you feel the Courthouse Grounds Park is in good shape?

Answered: 191 Skipped: 3

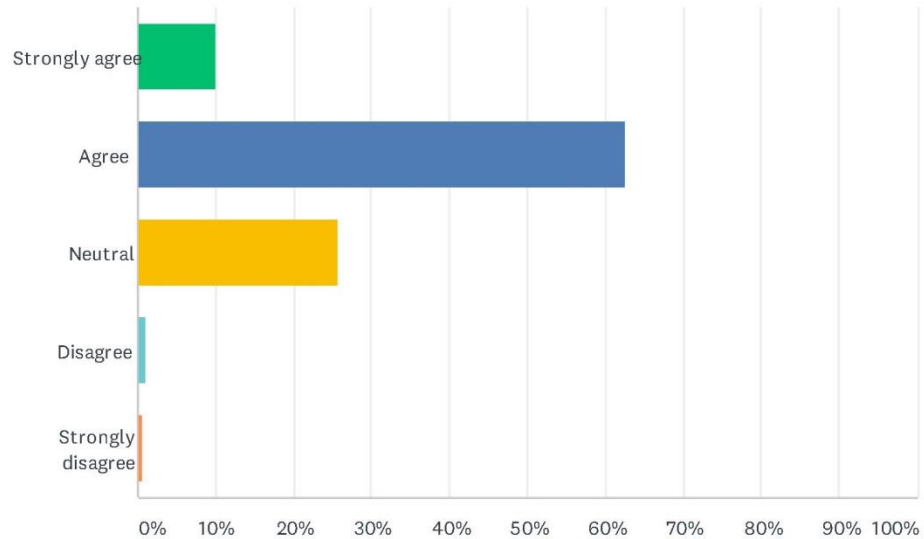


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	5.76%	11
Agree	60.73%	116
Neutral	29.32%	56
Disagree	3.14%	6
Strongly disagree	1.05%	2
TOTAL		191

# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q17 Do you feel the Courthouse Grounds Park memorials to our troops are in good shape?

Answered: 190 Skipped: 4

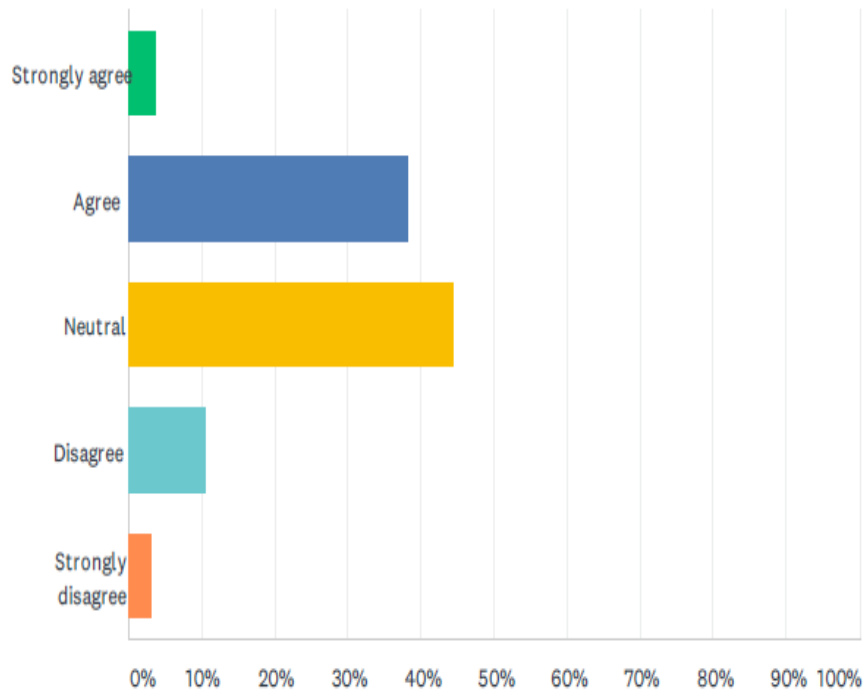


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	10.00%	19
Agree	62.63%	119
Neutral	25.79%	49
Disagree	1.05%	2
Strongly disagree	0.53%	1
TOTAL		190

# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q18 Do you feel the Courthouse Grounds Park fountain is in good shape?

Answered: 191 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	3.66%	7
Agree	38.22%	73
Neutral	44.50%	85
Disagree	10.47%	20
Strongly disagree	3.14%	6
TOTAL		191



## Q19 Please give any additional feedback on the Courthouse Lawn Park.

Answered: 87 Skipped: 107

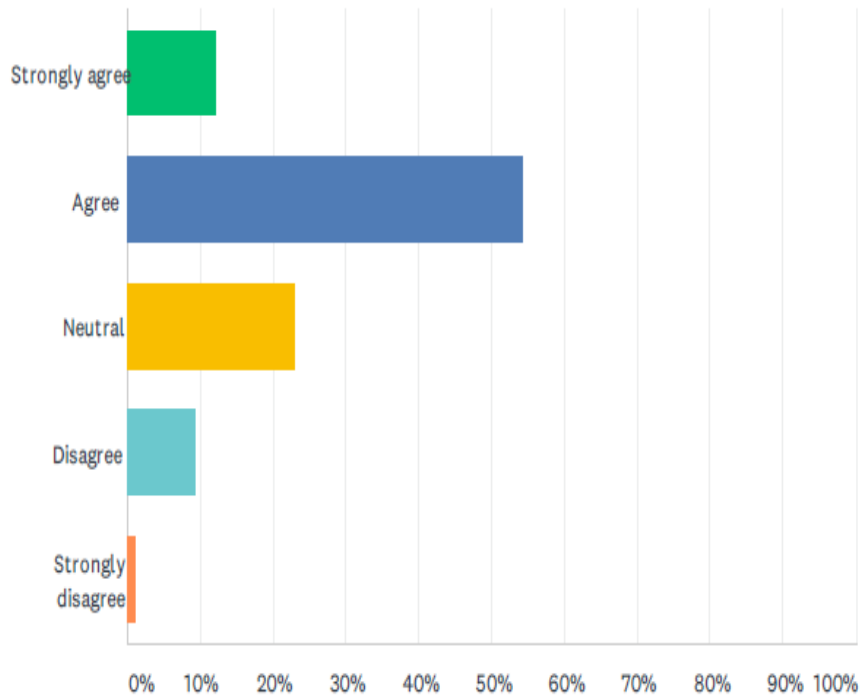
1. The modern art stuff looks awful. Landscaping could improve.
2. Clean up the fountain, as a kid I always like the fountain.
3. Miss seeing the fountain on.
4. Drinking fountain.
5. A very nice surrounding of the Courthouse.
6. The fountain should be running.
7. I don't see it as a place for the public to gather, but for the courthouse staff to relax for lunch.
8. I didn't realize it was considered a park. It might be nice to have more things for viewing/entertaining, particularly on the fountain section.
9. Should be used for more special events-food events, non-profit events.
10. Needs better care more flowers.
11. Don't pay a ton of money to move the fountain again.
12. Needs more flowers some type of statue patriotic
13. Needs to show more history of Hillsdale.
14. Flower beds need maintained.
15. It's bland. More flowers would be nice.
16. Needs local art.
17. Fountain needs fix and operational EVERY summer.
18. Is the fountain in working order?
19. This is a great asset in our downtown and the County is quite generous in allowing use of this space.
20. More seating/gathering places.

21. I would like it to be maintained.
22. We have not visited the courthouse many times in our lives, so we don't have firsthand knowledge. But we would like to see it maintained in a proper and respectful way.
23. I guess I need to check it out. I didn't know it was considered a park around the courthouse. It seems a friendly place and looks nice driving by.
24. More benches.
25. Could be cleaner.
26. Fountain needs to be working. Couple more benches or picnic tables, bike racks would be nice.
27. More benches?
28. More benches could have a few picnic tables.
29. The fountain is disappointing.
30. We have a wonderful old courthouse, that fountain is ugly. Does not add to our downtown in any way.
31. Turn the fountain back on...it's sad to not see it running thru the summer.
32. Wasn't fountain redone in the past few years?
33. Add a few more benches.
34. Restore the fountain, update benches, bike racks, landscaping.
35. I really love this park because of the fountain. I would like to see more in the park about Hillsdale history. We could use this especially when people are here for court or other things that bring them to Hillsdale.
36. Better benches.
37. The fountain is a world class piece of sculpture and needs to be highlighted.

# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q20 Do you feel the Lewis Emery Park picnic facilities are accommodating?

Answered: 191 Skipped: 3

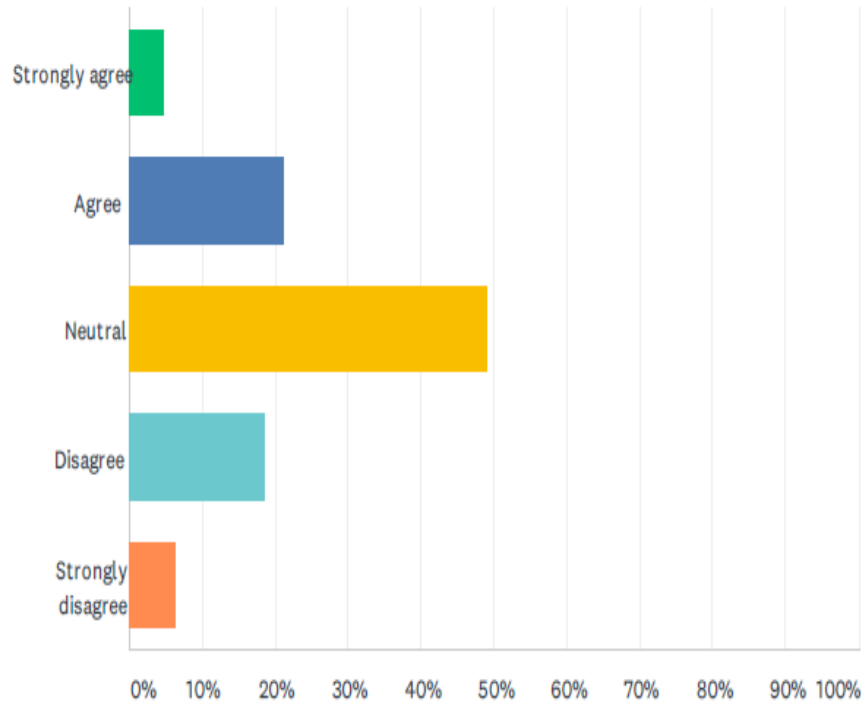


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	12.04%	23
Agree	54.45%	104
Neutral	23.04%	44
Disagree	9.42%	18
Strongly disagree	1.05%	2
TOTAL		191

## Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

### Q21 Do you feel the Lewis Emery Park bathrooms are adequate?

Answered: 189 Skipped: 5

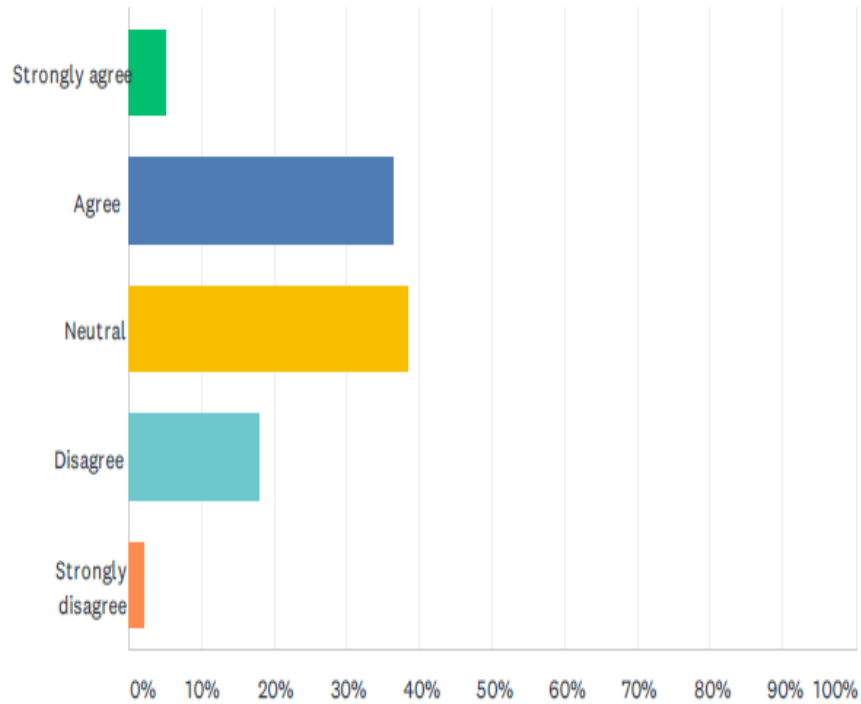


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	4.76%	9
Agree	21.16%	40
Neutral	49.21%	93
Disagree	18.52%	35
Strongly disagree	6.35%	12
TOTAL		189

# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q22 Do you feel the Lewis Emery Park playground is adequate?

Answered: 190 Skipped: 4



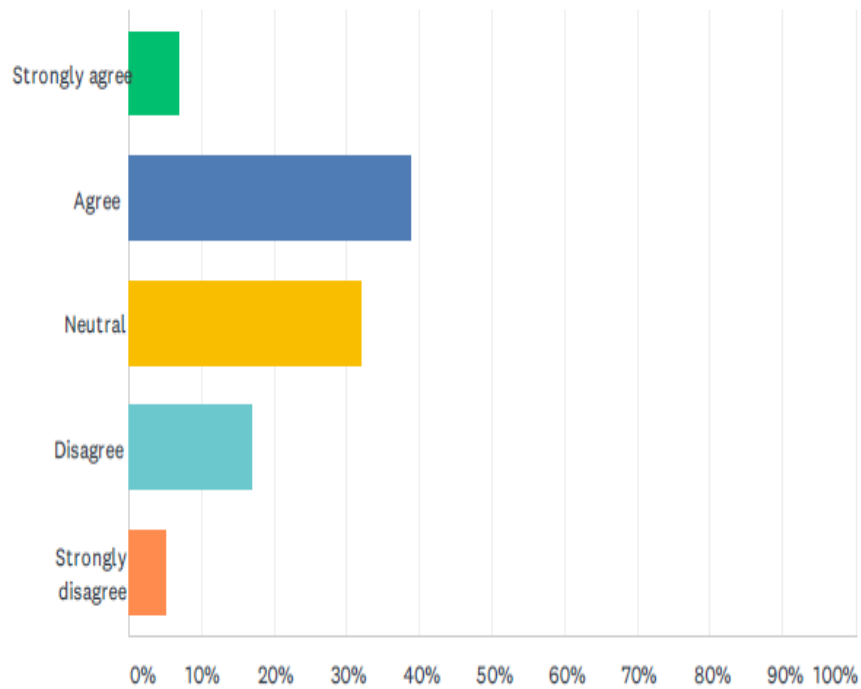
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	5.26%	10
Agree	36.32%	69
Neutral	38.42%	73
Disagree	17.89%	34
Strongly disagree	2.11%	4
TOTAL		190



# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q23 Do you feel the Lewis Emery Park fishing facilities are adequate (docks, access)?

Answered: 190 Skipped: 4

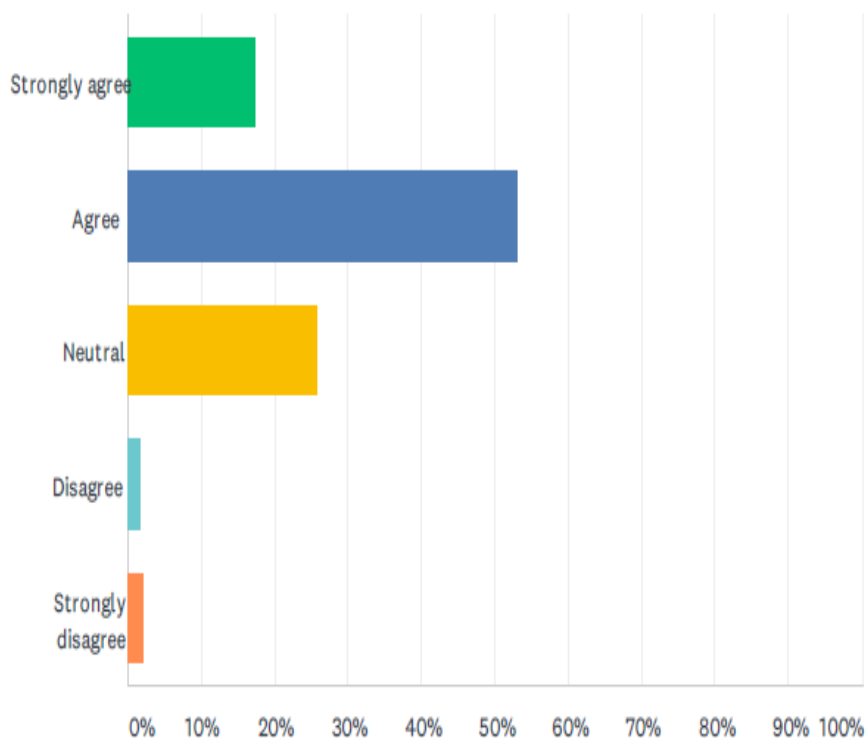


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	6.84%	13
Agree	38.95%	74
Neutral	32.11%	61
Disagree	16.84%	32
Strongly disagree	5.26%	10
TOTAL		190

# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q24 Do you feel the Lewis Emery Park Community Center is adequate?

Answered: 190 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	17.37%	33
Agree	53.16%	101
Neutral	25.79%	49
Disagree	1.58%	3
Strongly disagree	2.11%	4
TOTAL		190

## Q25 Please give any additional feedback on Lewis Emery Park.

Answered: 88 Skipped: 106

1. Docks for fishing are in serious unsafe conditions.
2. The cheap docks detract from the overall appearance of the park. Litter is another detractor from the parks. The staff has done quite well maintaining the trails.
3. The fishing docks are an eyesore.
4. Need to upgrade playground equipment and fix and repair docks.
5. With the overwhelming amount of geese always in that area, it makes it very hard to drive in and out at times. Also, with all the goose droppings it gives it an unclean appearance.
6. Please make your parks wheelchair accessible. People in wheelchairs like to enjoy the parks, playgrounds, and fish.
7. It's a beautiful place to walk and enjoy nature. Needs more benches.
8. It needs more maintenance and improvements to hiking trails.
9. Concessions open more.
10. All facilities are excellent according to my judgment.
11. Don't understand why platforms were blocked off.
12. The Community Center is an asset that is great to have, and should be kept up to date.
13. Would like to see better dock upkeep. Some of them have been in bad shape especially after winter.
14. I think non-profits should be able to use the community center with no costs, deposit only.
15. There should be a reduced rate for non-profits to use the building(like Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts)
16. Flowers.
17. Pickle ball courts would be great here.
18. Doing a good job out there.

19. Half the docks are broken and falling apart, broken, sinking, or just not safe.
20. Could use a few more docks and an upgrade to the playground in the back and its pavilion redone. Handicap port a pot.
21. The lakes need to be dredged, docks refurbished.
22. Those docks look ridiculous painted. There aren't enough picnic tables or benches. Chopping down the trees made it ugly.
23. Docks are in need of repair, ponds need to be dredged and a good stocking program started.
24. Like the sledding hill.
25. Is the perfect place for gatherings and events.
26. Docks are in bad shape, many were taken out. A lot of fishing is not possible due to weeds not taken care of on banks or in the water.
27. It needs a lot of work. More bathrooms, needs a paved/concrete basketball court, and water.
28. It's in the worst shape for what used to be such a beautiful park. It's horrible that almost all the docks are falling apart and unsafe.
29. Docks need fixed, lilly pads need maintained, low water levels need addressed. Docks need mixed up or more added to different spots. Been fishing the same spots for 4 decades.
30. I wish there were a way to make the Community Center into an educational outpost of sorts.
31. More kids stuff, better kids stuff.
32. We love Lewis Emery Park. We'd like to see Civil War re-enactments there or other historical events.
33. Open the Community Center.
34. This park has become a busy place for people walking dogs and themselves. The whole park needs a lot of attention to trees and brush. The upper path needs wood chips, picnic tables, need painting and docks repaired.
35. The walking trails are starting to become a bit run down in terms of maintenance, adding wood chips, brush cleared, etc.
36. This is an enjoyable park that I hope will be kept open for community use.
37. We enjoy walking and driving around the park. It is a true county treasure. We eat picnics and enjoy the nature walks around the park and ponds. We take our family. It is so relaxing there. When the building is open, we have attended many events there. Please do everything you can to maintain it.

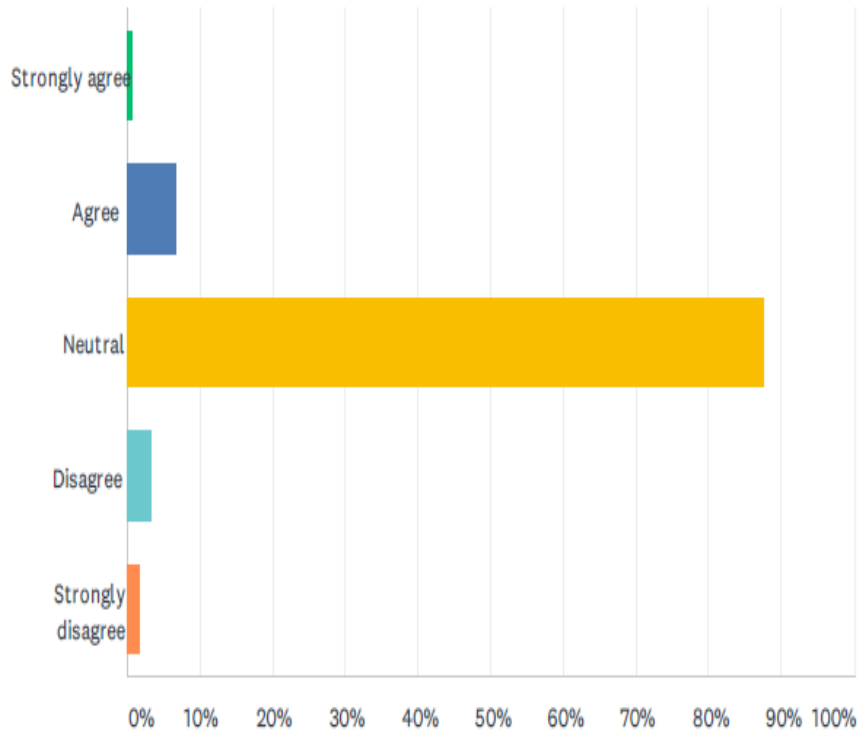
38. The community building could use some updating. I don't always feel safe in the park and I never let my kids go there alone.
39. More accessible restrooms. More benches.
40. Needs some better defined hiking trails.
41. All bathrooms need to be updated and additional one built.
42. Docks are deteriorating.
43. It could use some updates.
44. I enjoy the nature.
45. This is a very old park. Some of the improvements are nice but could use more help of a face-lift.
46. Community building is an asset.
47. The docks need redone again besides just painting...need actual bathrooms not port a potty.
48. I don't think I've ever seen a restroom there. If they have them I don't know where they are.
49. The placement of picnic tables is usually in the way for disc golf. If the disc golf is promoted and expanded, it can bring a lot to a community. There are tournaments and many more opportunities available in this fast growing sport.
50. Replace fishing docks, benches with poly wood, put cap stones on the stone pillars supporting the entrance sign to protect the mortar joints.
51. Nice facility, have used many times.
52. I visit this park on a daily basis. I have noticed a few things. First I notice that the weeds are terrible. I notice how the docks are falling apart and I notice there are a ton of waterfowl always looking for food. I suggest that the weeds get cleaned up, the docks get in good repair, and maybe some quarter fed bird vending machines or something of that nature. I also noticed there is a ton of wildlife which is awesome to see. So somehow maybe incorporating the wildlife into the whole scheme.
53. They don't have docks for people to use.
54. Handicap access for fishing.



# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q26 Do you feel the Hemlock Lake Park playground is adequate?

Answered: 178 Skipped: 16

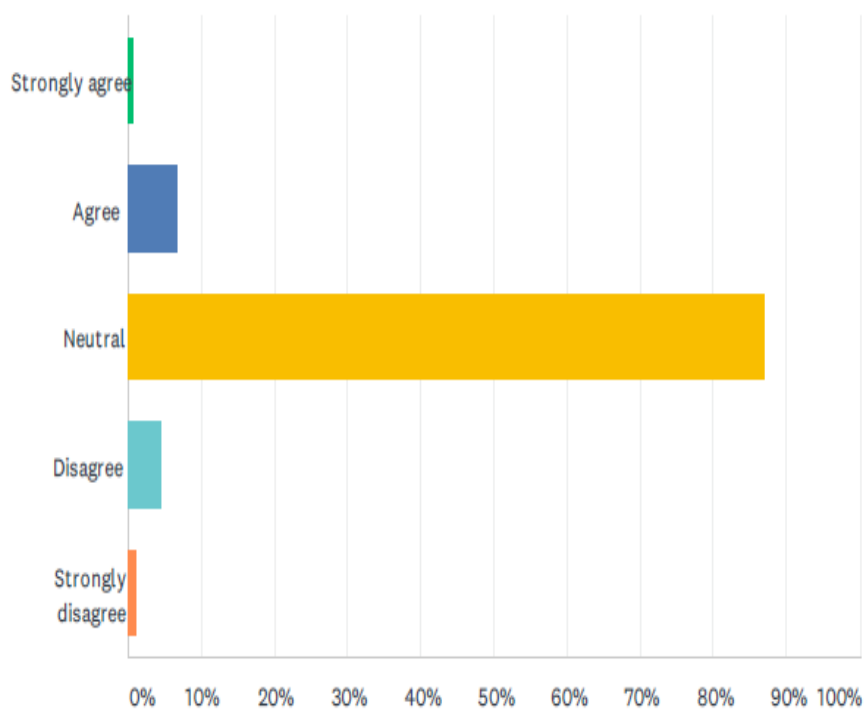


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	0.56%	1
Agree	6.74%	12
Neutral	87.64%	156
Disagree	3.37%	6
Strongly disagree	1.69%	3
TOTAL		178

# Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

## Q27 Do you feel the Hemlock Lake Park pavilion is adequate?

Answered: 177 Skipped: 17

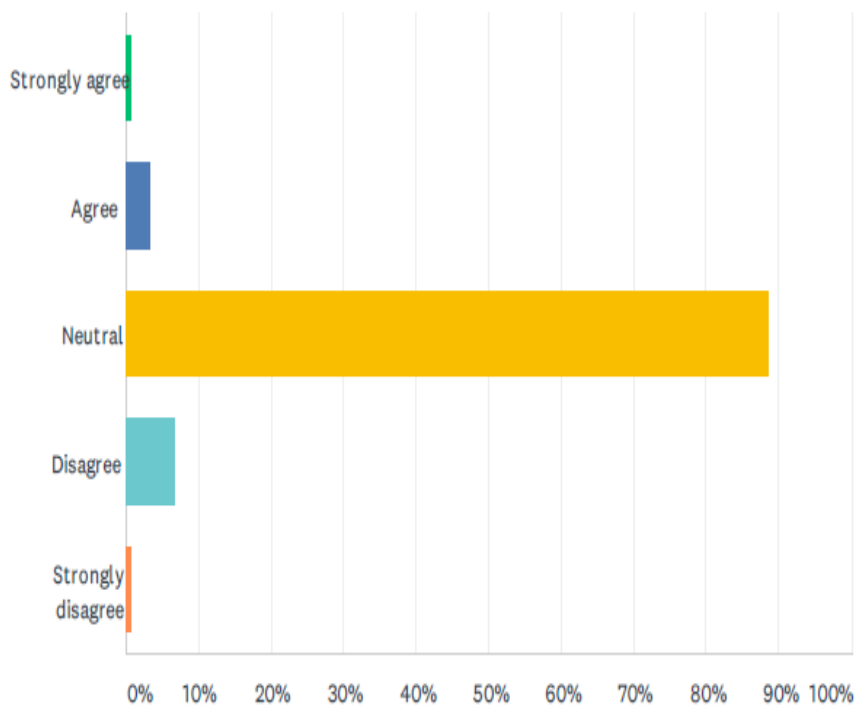


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	0.56%	1
Agree	6.78%	12
Neutral	87.01%	154
Disagree	4.52%	8
Strongly disagree	1.13%	2
TOTAL		177

## Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

### Q28 Do you feel the Hemlock Lake Park grill is adequate?

Answered: 177 Skipped: 17



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	0.56%	1
Agree	3.39%	6
Neutral	88.70%	157
Disagree	6.78%	12
Strongly disagree	0.56%	1
TOTAL		177

Hillsdale County 2021 Parks Survey

Q29 Please give any additional feedback on Hemlock Lake Park.

Answered: 70 Skipped: 124

1. I would like to buy the land the park is on.
2. Please make all Hillsdale county parks wheelchair accessible. Playground equipment included
3. Better maintenance.
4. It would be nice to see things spruced up a bit.
5. Create a sidewalk to the pavilion.

## Appendix C – Sources of Funding



## **SOURCES OF RECREATION GRANT FUNDING IN MICHIGAN**

### **Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF)**

Match requirement – minimum of 25%

Development grants

Minimum Grant Request \$15,000

Maximum Grant Request \$300,000

Acquisition grants

No minimum or maximum

Goals of MNRTF Board

Resource Protection

Water Access

Community Recreation

Urban Recreation

Economic Development

Due annually on April 1. Awards announced in December

[www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr)

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund**

Administered by MNRTF

50% match required

Minimum grant request \$30,000 (\$60,000 project total)

Maximum grant request \$500,000 (\$1,000,000 project total)

Funds a wide variety of outdoor recreation development projects

Applications due annually on April 1. Awards usually announced in December

Must meet SCORP criteria (Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan)

[www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr)

A pass-thru grant from the National Park Service involves a little more grant administration.

## **Michigan Recreation Passport Grant**

Administered by MNRTF

Minimum 25% match

Focus is on improving and renovating existing parks

Minimum grant request - \$7,500

Maximum \$150,000

Applications due on April 1. Application is simpler than the above two grants.

For outdoor and indoor recreation projects

Renovation of existing facilities is emphasized

[www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr)

## **Community Foundations**

### **Private Foundations and Endowments (Examples)**

Wickes Foundation

Strosacker Foundation

Gerstacker Foundation

For more complete lists of foundations, search online databases that can be found at [www.nccs.urban.org](http://www.nccs.urban.org) or [www.foundationcenter.org](http://www.foundationcenter.org)

## **Midwest Glacial Lakes Program**

Invested in protecting lakes

<https://midwestglaciallakes.org>

## **Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership**

Resources for how to provide erosion control through natural shorelines.

<https://www.mishorelinepartnership.org>

## Appendix D – Notification and Adoption Information



**APPENDIX L:**  
**POST COMPLETION SELF-INSPECTION REPORT**

Michigan Department of Natural Resources - Grants Management

**PUBLIC OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANT**

**POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT**

This information required under authority of Part 19, PA 451 of 1994, as amended;  
the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, 78 Stat. 897 (1964); and Part 715, of PA 451 of 1994, as amended.

**GRANT TYPE:**

(Please select  
one)

☐ MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND

☐ CLEAN MICHIGAN INITIATIVE

☐ LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUN

☐ RECREATION PASSPORT

☒ BOND FUND

**GRANTEE:** Hillsdale County

**PROJECT NUMBER:** BF-062

**PROJECT TYPE:** COMBINATION

**PROJECT TITLE:** Lewis EMCVY PARK  
COMMUNITY BUILDING, playground

**PROJECT SCOPE:**

**TO BE COMPLETED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY (GRANTEE)**

Name of Agency (Grantee)

Hillsdale County

Contact Person

Derek Ringman

Title

CFO

Address

33 McCollum ST

Telephone

517-437-2739

City, State, ZIP

Hillsdale MI 49242

Email

d.ringman@co.hillsdale.mi.us

**SITE DEVELOPMENT**

Any change(s) in the facility type, site layout, or recreation activities provided?

If yes, please describe change(s).

☐ Yes ☒ No

Has any portion of the project site been converted to a use other than outdoor recreation? If yes, please describe what portion and describe use. (This would include cell towers and any non-recreation buildings.)

☐ Yes ☒ No

Are any of the facilities obsolete? If yes, please explain.

☐ Yes ☒ No

**SITE QUALITY**

Is there a park entry sign which identifies the property or facility as a public recreation area?

If yes, please provide a photograph of the sign. If no, please explain.

☒ Yes ☐ No

Are the facilities and the site being properly maintained? If no, please explain.

☒ Yes ☐ No

Is vandalism a problem at this site? If yes, explain the measures being taken to prevent or minimize vandalism. ☒ Yes ☐ No

Cameras have been installed

Is maintenance scheduled on a regular basis? If yes, give schedule. If no, please explain. ☒ Yes ☐ No

The building is cleaned regularly and repairs are made as needed

#### GENERAL

Is a Program Recognition plaque permanently displayed at the site? If yes, please provide a photograph. (Not required for Bond Fund Grants) ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Is any segment of the general public restricted from using the site or facilities? (i.e. resident only, league only, boaters only, etc.) If yes, please explain. ☐ Yes ☒ No

Is a fee charged for use of the site or facilities? If yes, please provide fee structure. ☒ Yes ☐ No

S-F 150 Wedding PACK 500  
SAT 400 FUNERAL ON SAT 150

What are the hours and seasons for availability of the site?

Year around 8am-1am

COMMENTS (ATTACH SEPARATE SHEET IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED)

#### CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that I am duly elected, appointed and/or authorized by the Grantee named above and that the information and answers provided herein are true and accurate to the best of my personal knowledge, information and belief.

Derek Ringman

Please print


  
Grantee Authorized Signature

3/10/2021

Date

Bruce Caswell

Please print

  
Witness Signature

3/10/2021

Date

Send completed report to:

POST COMPLETION GRANT INSPECTION REPORTS  
GRANTS MANAGEMENT  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
PO BOX 30425  
LANSING MI 48909-7925

*Work at this Site  
Funded by*

**Protecting  
Michigan's  
Future**



*Your Bond Dollars at Work*



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Project Number: BF 93-062

Project Title: Community Center  
Development

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Protecting Michigan's Future

Recreation Bond Program

Development Project Agreement

THIS AGREEMENT, made this 13 day of June, 1994, by and between the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, for and on behalf of the State of Michigan, hereinafter referred to as the "DEPARTMENT" and the SUBURBAN COMMUNITY CENTER, a not-for-profit corporation, hereinafter referred to as the "GRANT RECIPIENT".

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, 1988 P.A. 329, provides for the establishment of Protecting Michigan's Future, Recreation Bond Program; and

WHEREAS, 1988 P.A. 329, provides moneys deposited in said fund shall be used exclusively for the development of land for public recreational purposes including but not limited to redevelopment of recreation infrastructure, waterfront revitalization, community recreation, tourist attractions, intermediate school district's environmental education facilities, recreation development of an industrial site; and

WHEREAS, 1994 P.A. 134 appropriates funds from the Protecting Michigan's Future, Recreation Bond Program to the DEPARTMENT for a grant-in-aid to the GRANT RECIPIENT for development of recreational facilities; and

WHEREAS, the DEPARTMENT and the GRANT RECIPIENT, in fulfillment of the purposes of 1988 P.A. 329 and 1994 P.A. 134 have negotiated the within Agreement;

NOW THEREFORE, the DEPARTMENT and the GRANT RECIPIENT, in consideration of the terms, promises, conditions, and assurances hereinafter set forth, mutually agree as follows:

1. This Agreement shall be administered on behalf of the DEPARTMENT through its Administrative Services Division. All reports, documents, or actions required of the GRANT RECIPIENT shall be submitted to the Recreation Bond Program, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Recreation Grants Section, P.O. Box 30425, Lansing, Michigan 48909-7925.

The use herein of the words "project area" shall mean the area described below (Legal Description) and shown on the attached boundary map.

The use herein of the word "facilities" shall mean the following individual components of the above-described overall project for which the GRANT RECIPIENT requested assistance:

1. Demolition
2. Construct Community Center
3. Maintenance Building

The DEPARTMENT agrees as follows:

- a. To grant to the said GRANT RECIPIENT a sum of money equal to Seventy-Five (75%) percent of the total cost of construction of the facilities called for by this Agreement, including engineering costs therefore, but which shall not in any event exceed One hundred seventy-five thousand five hundred (\$175,500) dollars. This sum shall be used only for the construction of the facilities called for in Section 3 and engineering costs therefore.
- b. To pay the money appropriated by the preceding section to the GRANT RECIPIENT as follows:

Payments will be made on a reimbursement basis; Seventy-Five (75%) percent of eligible expenses, up to 90% of the Maximum Grant Allowable, will be disbursed upon receipt of an expenditure list supported by copies of invoices and descriptions, copies of cancelled checks, and/or lists of force account time and attendance records. The final payment will be withheld pending satisfactory project completion and audit.



APPENDIX L:  
POST COMPLETION SELF-INSPECTION REPORT

Michigan Department of Natural Resources - Grants Management

PUBLIC OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANT

POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT

This information required under authority of Part 19, PA 451 of 1994, as amended;  
the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, 78 Stat. 897 (1964); and Part 715, of PA 451 of 1994, as amended.

GRANT TYPE:  
(Please select  
one)

☐ MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND  
☒ LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUN

☐ CLEAN MICHIGAN INITIATIVE  
☐ RECREATION PASSPORT

☐ BOND FUND

GRANTEE: Hillsdale County

PROJECT NUMBER: LWCF-26-01060M3

PROJECT TYPE: COMBINATION

PROJECT TITLE: LEWIS EMERY PARK

Picnic room, grill, softball field, playground, trail,  
PROJECT SCOPE: Picnic tables, basketball court

TO BE COMPLETED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY (GRANTEE)

Name of Agency (Grantee)

Hillsdale

Contact Person

Derek Ringman

Title

CFO

Address

33 McCollum

Telephone

517-437-2739

City, State, ZIP

Hillsdale MI 49242

Email

d.ringman@co.hillsdale.mi.us

SITE DEVELOPMENT

Any change(s) in the facility type, site layout, or recreation activities provided?  
If yes, please describe change(s).

☐ Yes ☒ No

Has any portion of the project site been converted to a use other than outdoor recreation? If yes, please describe what portion and describe use. (This would include cell towers and any non-recreation buildings.)

☐ Yes ☒ No

Are any of the facilities obsolete? If yes, please explain.

☒ Yes ☐ No

Playground equip is old

SITE QUALITY

Is there a park entry sign which identifies the property or facility as a public recreation area?  
If yes, please provide a photograph of the sign. If no, please explain.

☒ Yes ☐ No

Are the facilities and the site being properly maintained? If no, please explain.

☒ Yes ☐ No

Is vandalism a problem at this site? If yes, explain the measures being taken to prevent or minimize vandalism. <span style="float: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</span>						
Is maintenance scheduled on a regular basis? If yes, give schedule. If no, please explain. <span style="float: right;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</span> <i>IT is mowed. Things are fixed as needed</i>						
<b>GENERAL</b>						
Is a Program Recognition plaque permanently displayed at the site? If yes, please provide a photograph. (Not required for Bond Fund Grants) <span style="float: right;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</span>						
Is any segment of the general public restricted from using the site or facilities? (i.e. resident only, league only, boaters only, etc.) If yes, please explain. <span style="float: right;"><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</span>						
Is a fee charged for use of the site or facilities? If yes, please provide fee structure. <span style="float: right;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</span> <i>Pavilion 30</i>						
What are the hours and seasons for availability of the site? <i>Year around 8am-10pm</i>						
<b>COMMENTS (ATTACH SEPARATE SHEET IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED)</b>						
<b>CERTIFICATION</b>						
I do hereby certify that I am duly elected, appointed and/or authorized by the Grantee named above and that the information and answers provided herein are true and accurate to the best of my personal knowledge, information and belief.						
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 45%; vertical-align: bottom;"> <i>Derek D. Ingman</i>            Please print         </td> <td style="width: 45%; vertical-align: bottom;"> <i>[Signature]</i>            Grantee Authorized Signature         </td> <td style="width: 10%; vertical-align: bottom;"> <i>3/10/2021</i>            Date         </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: bottom;"> <i>Bruce Casswell</i>            Please print         </td> <td style="vertical-align: bottom;"> <i>[Signature]</i>            Witness Signature         </td> <td style="vertical-align: bottom;"> <i>3/10/2021</i>            Date         </td> </tr> </table>	<i>Derek D. Ingman</i> Please print	<i>[Signature]</i> Grantee Authorized Signature	<i>3/10/2021</i> Date	<i>Bruce Casswell</i> Please print	<i>[Signature]</i> Witness Signature	<i>3/10/2021</i> Date
<i>Derek D. Ingman</i> Please print	<i>[Signature]</i> Grantee Authorized Signature	<i>3/10/2021</i> Date				
<i>Bruce Casswell</i> Please print	<i>[Signature]</i> Witness Signature	<i>3/10/2021</i> Date				

Send completed report to:

POST COMPLETION GRANT INSPECTION REPORTS  
 GRANTS MANAGEMENT  
 MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
 PO BOX 30425  
 LANSING MI 48909-7925







# sville council tackles light agenda

through November 2024. The council also voted to establish a meeting calendar for the Board of Review, which will meet in March, July and December. City Manager Jeff Gray anticipated the March organizational meeting and March appeal meeting will be held in person. If later meetings are held in person, they will be held at the Jonesville Fire

Department where social distancing can be accommodated. The council also took action to affirm an income and asset guideline which will be used in the consideration of property tax exemption requests during 2023. Guidelines were first established in 2018 when the council passed a resolution establishing them for the Board of Review to

evaluate requests for exemption from the payment of property taxes based on household income. The guidelines establish that income and asset guidelines will follow federal standards. Finally, Gray announced that through two donations from Consumer's Energy and a third from a private donor, the DDA was able to fund a gift card and gift certificate program that

invested \$23,200 in participating businesses in the downtown area in mid-December 2020. "At least one card or certificate was purchased from each participating business and buyers generally spread their purchases to multiple businesses," Gray said. The Jonesville City Council will meet again at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 17.



The Community Center at Lewis Emery Park hasn't been a source of income for the park since COVID-19 has limited functions there. (NANCY HASTINGS PHOTOS)

## Survey to provide info for parks plan

By Nancy Hastings  
@nhastings101

HILLSDALE - The Hillsdale County Parks trustees are having a former state representative write a five-year recreation plan for them to save area parks.

But before the plan can be written, a survey is required, asking people what the like and don't like and what they would like to see in some area parks.

Bruce Caswell said he was chosen to write the plan because he volunteered.

"I said I would do it for nothing," Caswell said. "The survey will give us information to help us plan."

The survey will be up for 30 days and is being done through survey monkey. The link for the survey is <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QPTXSKXG>.

"Once the plan is done and accepted by the State DNR, then the parks trustees will be able to apply for grants to help them fix up and improve our county parks," Caswell said. "Those parks are Lewis Emery, Bird Lake, Henlock Beach, Kathlamet, and the Courthouse Lawn."

Caswell explained that as part of putting together a five-year plan for the parks, it is required that public input is gathered on the parks.

See PARKS, A2



The docks at Lewis Emery Park are among items in need of attention at the park.

US jobless claims decline to a still-high 900,000

...is offered

## PARKS

From Page A1

Caswell said he volunteered because the county commissioners were thinking about paying Region 2 about \$12,000 to get it done.

"I said that was ridiculous," Caswell said. "I never served on the parks committee. I do not have any particular hopes for the plan. I am simply a collector of information and will reflect that information in the plan."

Caswell added that he has no idea the feedback that will come in.

"I think 200-300 would be a good response," he said. "Once the plan is done, then the parks commission can apply for grants. If they get the grants, that might have an impact on the area economically."

Those serving on the parks commission include Bob Godfrey, Mike Parney and Gary Leininger.

Providing some background, Mike Parney said the plan is needed, particularly to keep Lewis Emery Park open.

"If we don't get more money from the county, then it will end up closing," he said. "With Covid

going on and the community center not open, there has been no income."

Parney said parks need funding and after the county cut their funding years ago, Lewis Emery has been surviving off the community center.

"It's not able to make it and it will close without some form of income," Parney said.

Godfrey said the five year plan is needed to apply for the grant and now that Caswell volunteered to do the plan, he thinks the process will be very helpful.

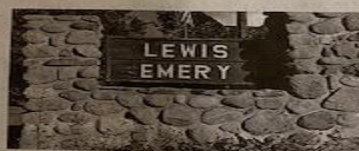
"The county just doesn't have enough money to go around," Godfrey said.

"There needs to be work done on the ponds, the docks and so on, so we have to get the grant."

Godfrey said Caswell is knowledgeable in the process and has taken classes on how to do it.

"Down the road, we'll ask him to write some grants for us," Godfrey said. "I think this will really help us."

For more information, call Caswell at: 517-523-3067 or email: [bcaswell@frontier.com](mailto:bcaswell@frontier.com). The survey site will be up until Feb. 19 and Caswell said the link will also be on the county website: [www.co.hillsdale.mi.us](http://www.co.hillsdale.mi.us).



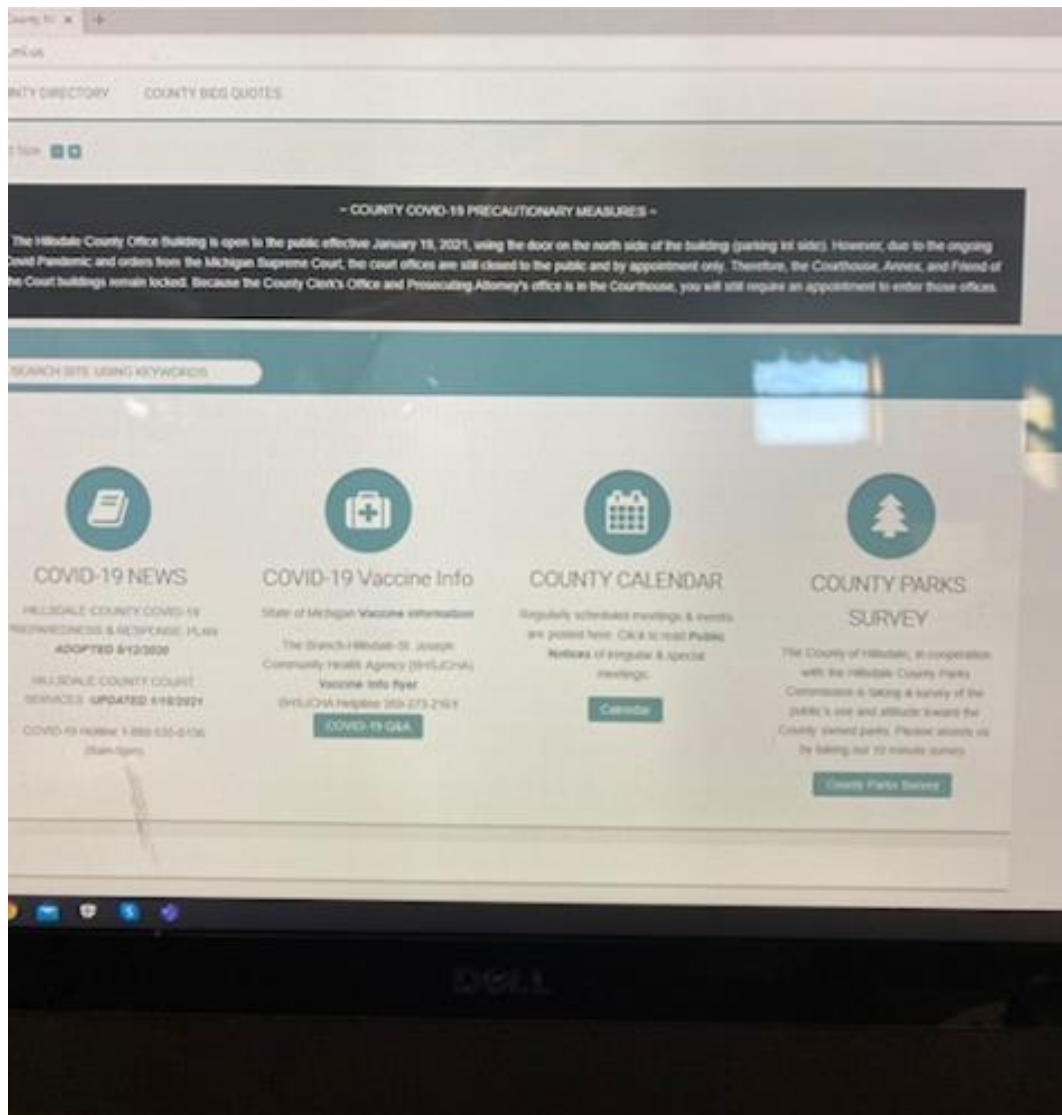
Before putting together a five-year plan for the parks, it is required that public input is gathered on the parks. [FILE PHOTO]

This scene at Traverse County during a blizzard in 2014.

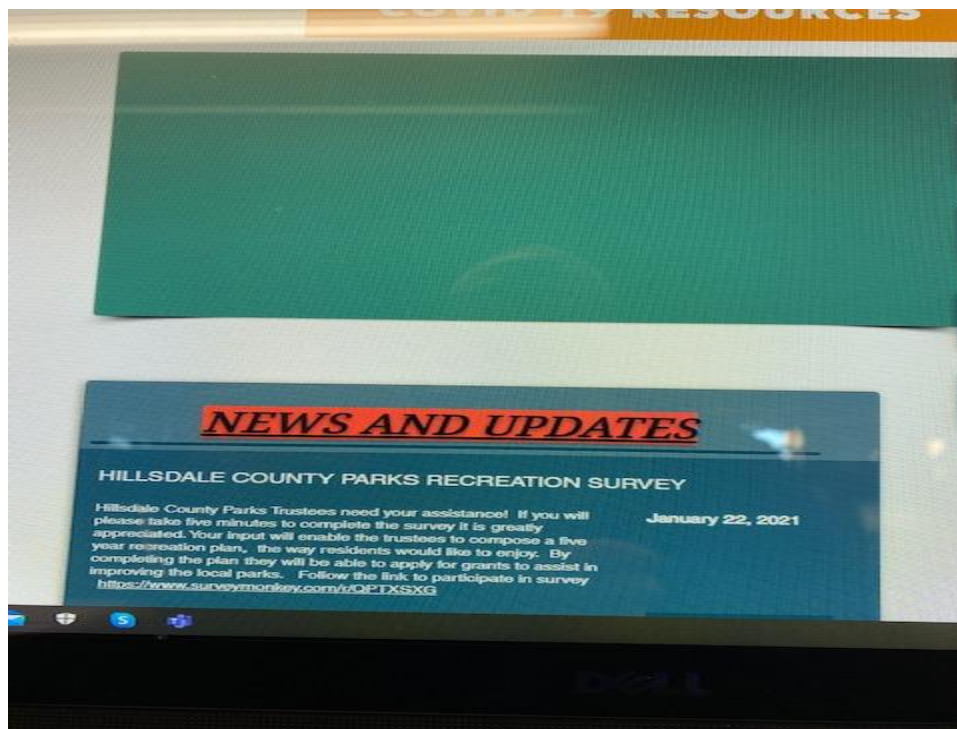
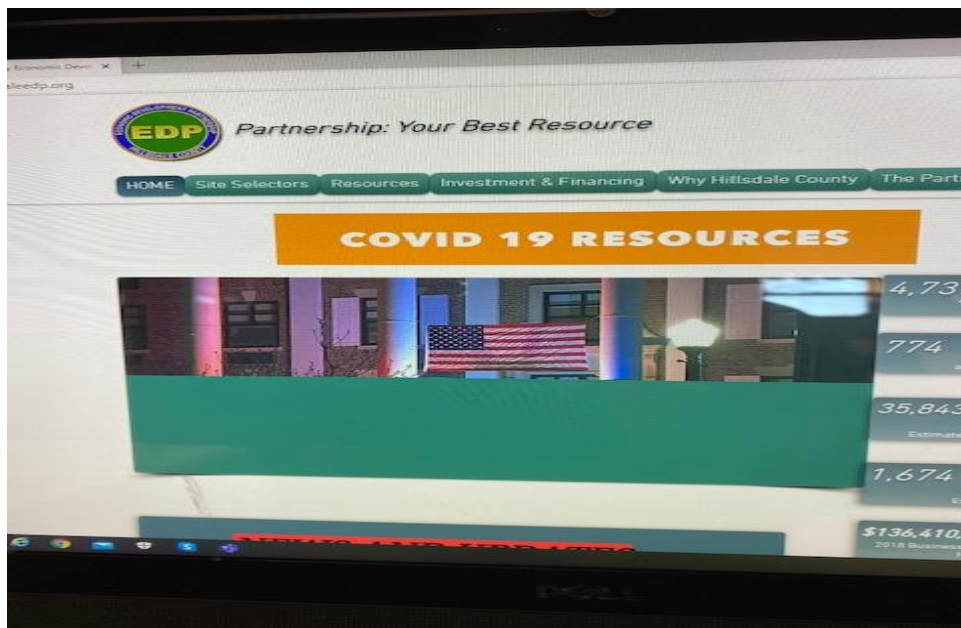




Facebook



Hillsdale County Website.



Economic Development Website

Ads were also run on the local radio station, WCSR, for 1 week.

May 3, 2021

**HILLSDALE COUNTY RECREATION  
PLAN NOTICE OF REVIEW**

Hillsdale County has developed an update of its Five-Year Recreation Master Plan. The plan is based on the Guidelines for Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans as published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. It evaluates existing recreation opportunities, reviews public opinion regarding recreating, sets goals and objectives, and proposes potential park improvements for the next five years.

Copies of the Draft Plan are available for review at the Hillsdale County Road Commission, 1919 Hudson Rd., Hillsdale, Mi and at the Hillsdale County Clerk's office, Hillsdale County Courthouse, and at [www.co.hillsdale.mi.us](http://www.co.hillsdale.mi.us) from May 4, 2021 through June 9, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

If you are interested in submitting comments regarding the Draft Plan, please send written comments to the following address:

**Hillsdale County Parks Department  
1919 Hudson Rd. Hillsdale, Mi. 49242**

by June 9, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. For more information please contact John Sanders, Hillsdale County Road Commission. Phone 517-437-4458.

A public meeting to take input on the draft plan will be held June 9, 2021 at 9 a.m. at 1919 Hudson Road, Hillsdale, Mi.

HP-00155538



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tion and all

(and destroys the twinned... then, we have a

www.tipoffonline.com

May 17, 2021

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*Rod & Janet Hathaway*  
TIMED ONLINE ONLY

June 24, 2021

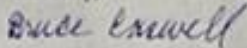
Hillsdale County Planning Commission  
County Office Building  
Equalization Department  
33 McCollum St.  
Hillsdale, MI 49242

RE: Hillsdale County  
Recreation Plan

To: Namoo Carolan  
Chairwoman

Please find enclosed the recently adopted Recreation Plan for Hillsdale County. It is being sent to the Hillsdale County Planning Commission according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements for the Development of Community Park and Recreation Plans. If you have any questions regarding the Plan feel free to contact me. Also, after you approve the Plan for your Planning Commission Document, please send me a copy of the resolution adopted along with the votes of each member of your board and have it signed by your secretary.

Sincerely,



Bruce Caswell  
Planner  
8940 E. Bacon Road  
Hillsdale, MI 49242  
Phone: 517-523-3067  
Mail to: bcaswell@frontier.com



June 24, 2021

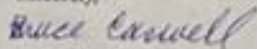
Region II Planning Commission  
120 W. Michigan Ave.  
Jackson, MI. 49201

RE: Hillsdale County  
Recreation Plan

To Whom it May Concern:

Please find enclosed the recently adopted Recreation Plan for Hillsdale County. It is being sent to the Hillsdale County Planning Commission according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements for the Development of Community Park and Recreation Plans. If you have any questions regarding the Plan feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Bruce Caswell  
Planner  
8940 E. Bacon Road  
Hillsdale, MI. 49242  
Phone: 517-523-3067  
Mail to: bcaswell@frontier.com

Meeting called to order by Chair Bob Godfrey at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, June 9, 2021, at the road commission office.

Members present: Bob Godfrey, Mike Parney & Gary Leininger.

Staff present: Marilyn Kilpatrick, Clerk, Bill Watkins, Park Manager & Bennie Martinez,  
Grounds Keeper/Custodian.

Visitors present: Doug Ingles, Hillsdale County Commissioner.

Bruce Caswell.

Roy Rodd.

Bob Schwartzwalder.

### **Agenda Approved**

1 Having reviewed the agenda for this date, there were no additions or deletions. The chair declared the agenda to stand approved as presented.

### **Minutes Approved As Presented**

Having reviewed the minutes of the May 12, 2021 regular meeting the chair asked if there were any corrections to be noted. As there were no questions or corrections to the minutes, the chair declared the minutes to stand approved as presented.

### **CONFIRMATION OF PAYROLL/ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AUTHORIZED FOR PAYMENT BY CLERK**

**#21-015** Gary Leininger moved, Mike Parney seconded, to confirm the payment of payroll/bills as follows as authorized by the clerk:

05/27/2021	Payroll	Check #2021-22	\$ 583.38
	Accounts Payable	Check #8492 - #8496	<u>\$ 269.88</u>
			\$ 853.26
	Total to be Paid		

06/09/2021	Payroll	Check #2021-23-2021-271	\$ 1,038.80
	Accounts Payable	Check #8497 - #8507	<u>\$ 1,300.63</u>
			\$ 2,339.43
	Total to be Paid		

Motion carried.

### **Public Hearing For The Hillsdale County Five Year Recreation Plan – 9:00 A.M.**

Various clerical corrections were discussed and made to the Five Year Recreation Plan. Also recommendations were made to add bass to the fish species, special mention for Bill Watkins as Park Manager and add McCourtie Park to the list as Parks in Hillsdale County. Copy attached.

### **HILLSDALE COUNTY FIVE YEAR RECREATION PLAN ADOPTED**

**#21-016** Gary Leininger moved, Mike Parney seconded, to adopt the Hillsdale County Five Year Recreation Plan as amended.

Yeas: Godfrey, Parney, Leininger.

Nays: None.

Carried. Resolution attached.

### **CHERYL DUNIGAN REQUESTING TO HOLD A MEMORIAL AT LEWIS EMERY PARK**

Cheryl Dunigan would like to hold a memorial at the Gazebo in Lewis Emery Park.

**#21-017** Mike Parney moved, Gary Leininger supported, to allow Cheryl Dunigan to use the Gazebo in Lewis Emery Park. Carried.

**Endowment Fund Balance**

Discussion followed on where to spend the monies from the Hillsdale County Community Foundation Endowment Fund. It was decided use the monies on a roof for the Gazebo and repairs to the waterfall.

**SAND REQUEST FROM BOB SWARTZWALDER FOR BIRD LAKE BEACH PARK**

**#21-018** Gary Leininger moved, Mike Parney seconded, to order a load of sand delivered to Bird Lake Beach Park. Carried.

**Meeting Adjourned – 10:18 a.m.**

As there was no further business, the chair declared the meeting adjourned at 10:18 a.m.

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Chair

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Clerk

Word\6.9.21 park minutes

**HILLSDALE COUNTY PARK COMMISSION**

**MINUTES**

June 9, 2021

**PARK COMMISSION MEETING**  
**HEARING FOR 5 YEAR RECREATION PLAN**  
**ATTENDANCE SHEET**

**July 9, 2021**

1. Roy C. Rodd
2. Bruce Caswell
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

**COUNTY PARK RESOLUTION #21-001**

**HILLSDALE COUNTY FIVE YEAR RECREATION PLAN  
FOR HILLSDALE COUNTY**

**WHEREAS**, the Hillsdale County Parks Commission has undertaken a planning process to determine the recreation and natural resource conservation needs and desires of its residents during a five year period covering the years 2021-2025, and

**WHEREAS**, the Hillsdale County Parks Commission began the process of developing a community recreation and natural resource conservation plan in accordance with the most recent guidelines developed by the Department of Natural Resources and made available to local communities, and

**WHEREAS**, residents of Hillsdale County were provided with a well-advertised opportunity during the development of the draft plan to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the recreation and natural resource conservation plan, and

**WHEREAS**, the public was given a well-advertised opportunity and reasonable accommodations to review the final draft plan for a period of at least 30 days, and

**WHEREAS**, a public hearing was held on June 9, 2021 at the Hillsdale County Road Commission, 1919 Hudson Road, Hillsdale, MI, to provide an opportunity for all residents of the planning area to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the Hillsdale County Five Year Recreation Plan, and

**WHEREAS**, the Hillsdale County Parks Commission has developed the plan as a guideline for improving recreation and enhancing natural resource conservation for Hillsdale County, and

**WHEREAS**, after the public hearing, the Hillsdale County Parks Commission voted to adopt said Hillsdale County Five Year Recreation Plan.

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** the Hillsdale County Board of Parks Commissioners hereby adopts the Hillsdale County Five Year Recreation Plan.



ADOPTED: Yeas, Godfrey, Parney, Leininger.  
Nays, None.

Motion carried.

I hereby certify that the foregoing constitutes a true and correct copy of a resolution made and adopted by the Board of County Parks Commissioners of the County of Hillsdale at a regular meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2021.

Attest   
Marilyn Kilpatrick - Clerk

The Regular Meeting of the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners convened on June 22, 2021 at the Board of Commissioners Room, 33 McCollum Street, Suite 210, Hillsdale, Michigan.

Commissioner Wiley called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America by Commissioner Benzing.

**ROLL CALL:**

**DISTRICT**

**PRESENT:**

**ABSENT:**

Doug Ingles  
Kathy Schmitt  
Mark Wiley  
Brad Benzing  
Brent Leininger

**AGENDA:**

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer & Pledge by Commissioner Benzing
3. Public Comment
4. Consent Agenda:
  - Review & Correction/Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes – June 8, 2021
  - 21-062: Payrolls/Payables/Transfers - May 2021
  - 21-063: Abolishment of the Office of County Corner
  - 21-064: Appointment of Medical Examiner
  - 21-065: Annual Payment to Michigan Association of Counties
  - 21-066: Authorize Chair to Sign Family Court Legal Services Contract - Doxtader
5. Correspondence – Listed
6. Regular Agenda
7. Standing Order:
  - 9:10 a.m. Susan Smith, Executive Director – Economic Development Partnership – Updates
  - 10:00 a.m. Public Hearing – Ordinance No. 2021-1 – Hillsdale County Planning Commission Ordinance of 2021
8. Committee Reports:
  - A. **BUDGET – KATHY SCHMITT**
  - B. **HUMAN SERVICES – BRENT LEININGER**
  - C. **PUBLIC SAFETY/JUDICIARY – BRAD BENZING**
  - D. **FACILITIES/TECH/ECON DEVELOPMENT – DOUG INGLES**
    - 21-067: Hillsdale County Planning Commission Ordinance
    - 21-068: Hillsdale County Recreation Plan
  - E. **CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT/MANAGEMENT & PERSONNEL – MARK WILEY**
    - 21-069: Authorize Extension Agreement – Brandes
    - 21-070: New Hire Checklist
    - 21-071: Separation of Employment Checklist
    - 21-072: ETSB Appointments
9. Public Comment
10. Additional Business

## 11. Adjournment

Present: Stephenie Kyser, Laura Rahe and Jim Graves.

9:04 a.m. Bob Eichler entered.

Under Public Comment Bob Eichler wanted to know if the board could put on the website the reasons for why the individual commissioners voted the way they did on the Spreading of Taxes Resolution from the last meeting he also stated that he hoped that the Road Commission was splitting up their crews so that more areas could be cleaned up after the recent storms.

9:14 a.m. Mr. Eichler exited.

Stephenie Kyser, Hillsdale County Treasurer informed the Board that she is looking into a new financial institution for the county's checking account. She stated that it may be Southern Michigan Bank.

C/Ingles moved to approve the Consent Agenda with the removal of Resolution 21-066 and placing it under the Chairperson's Report. Second by C/Schmitt. Vote unanimous. CARRIED

C/Benzing moved to approve the Regular Agenda with Resolution 21-066 added under the Chairperson's Report. Second by C/Schmitt. Vote unanimous. CARRIED

Sue Smith, Executive Director of the Economic Development Partnership, is not present for her presentation.

C/Schmitt gave an update on items under her committee.

C/Leininger gave an update on items under his committee.

9:22 a.m. Glen Frobel entered.

C/Benzing gave an update on items under his committee.

9:40 a.m. Mr. Graves exited.

There was some discussion regarding the lifting of COVID-19 mandates.

9:58 a.m. Bruce Caswell entered.

10:00 a.m. C/Leininger moved to open the Public Hearing on the Hillsdale County Planning Commission Ordinance.

An explanation on the purpose of this hearing was given. There was no public comment.

10:04 a.m. C/Leininger moved to close the Public Hearing. Second by C/Schmitt. Vote unanimous. CARRIED

C/Ingles moved to approve Resolution 21-067: Approval of the revised Hillsdale County Planning Commission Ordinance to be effective July 1, 2021. Second by C/Leininger. There was some discussion. Roll Call Vote: C/Leininger – Yes, C/Ingles – Yes, C/Schmitt – Yes, C/Wiley – Yes, C/Benzing – No.

CARRIED

Bruce Caswell addressed the Board regarding the Hillsdale County Recreation Plan. There were a few corrections to be made to the plan which included the following: on page 10, changing the word Commission to Trustees, removing the "s" on the word consists and removing the following words – to the Parks Board; page 11, changing "2" part time employees to "1" and on page 22, changing "two nature trails" to five nature trails, changing the word "is" to "was" and "draws" to "drew" in regards to the sentence that begins as follows – A cross country event.

C/Ingles moved to approve Resolution 21-068: Adoption of the Hillsdale County Five Year Recreational Plan. Second by C/Schmitt. There was some discussion

C/Leininger moved to amend the Resolution to change the wording Hillsdale County Parks Commission to Hillsdale County Parks Trustee Board. Second by C/Schmitt. Vote on amendment unanimous.

CARRIED

C/Benzing moved to amend the Resolution to add the following: effective January 1, 2021 through

December 31, 2025 after NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the Hillsdale County Five Year Recreation Plan. Second by C/Ingles. Vote on amendment unanimous. CARRIED

Roll Call Vote on the Resolution as amended: C/Ingles – Yes, C/Schmitt – Yes, C/Wiley – Yes, C/Benzing – Yes, C/Leininger – Yes. Vote: 5-Yes, 0-No.

CARRIED

11:02 a.m. Mr. Caswell exited.

C/Ingles gave an update on items under his committee including the receiving of bids for doing the parking lot at the Michigan Works SE Building and the opening of bids for work on the façade at the Sheriff's Office. He also stated that the heating and cooling system at the Courthouse should be complete by mid-July.

C/Wiley moved to approve Resolution 21-066: Probate Legal Services Contract with Rachel A. Doxtader for six months beginning July 1, 2021. Second by C/Ingles. There was some discussion. Vote unanimous. CARRIED

C/Wiley moved to approve Resolution 21-069: One month Probate Court Legal Services Contract with Roy Brandes to train Ms. Doxtader. Second by C/Schmitt. Vote unanimous.

CARRIED

C/Wiley moved to approve Resolution 21-070: Hillsdale County New Hire Checklist. Second by C/Benzing. A couple of motions were made and died for lack of support.

C/Leininger moved to refer the Resolution back to committee for revisions. Second by C/Benzing. Vote: 4-Yes, 1-No (C/Schmitt)

CARRIED

C/Wiley moved to approve Resolution 21-071: Separation from Employment Checklist. Second by C/Schmitt. There was a lengthy discussion. Vote: 4-Yes, 1-No (C/Leininger) CARRIED

C/Wiley moved to approve Resolution 21-072: Appointments to the ETSB (Emergency Telephone Services Board). Second by C/Benzing. Vote unanimous. CARRIED

C/Wiley gave an update on some items of interest.

C/Benzing moved to have Facilities remove all of the COVID signs from the County buildings. Second by C/Leininger. Vote unanimous. CARRIED

Under Public Comment, Laura Rahe informed the Board that the Courts are at Phase 4 and they will start to begin to resume Jury Trials.

Glen Frobel suggested that the Road Commission be present to address the concern regarding the Montgomery Bridge due to conflicting information. He also thanked the Public Board of Utilities and Consumers Power for their hard work restoring power after the recent storm.

12:13 p.m. Mr. Frobel exited.

Additional comments were made by Commissioners Benzing and Ingles.

12:19 p.m. adjournment by call of the Chair.

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Mark E. Wiley, Chair  
Board of Commissioners

Marney M. Kast,  
County Clerk

**HILLSDALE COUNTY FIVE YEAR RECREATION PLAN**  
**For Hillsdale County**  
**21-068**  
**June 22, 2021**

**WHEREAS**, the Hillsdale County Parks Commission has undertaken a planning process to determine the recreation and natural resource conservation needs and desires of its residents during a five year period covering the years 2021-2025, and

**WHEREAS**, the Hillsdale County Parks Commission began the process of developing a community recreation and natural resource conservation plan in accordance with the most recent guidelines developed by the Department of Natural Resources and made available to local communities, and

**WHEREAS**, residents of Hillsdale County were provided with a well-advertised opportunity during the development of the draft plan to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the recreation and natural resource conservation plan, and

**WHEREAS**, the public was given a well-advertised opportunity and reasonable accommodations to review the final draft plan for a period of at least 30 days, and

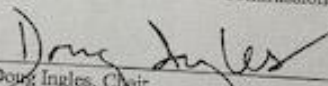
**WHEREAS**, a public hearing was held on June 9, 2021 at the Hillsdale County Road Commission, 1919 Hudson Rd., Hillsdale, Mi. to provide an opportunity for all residents of the planning area to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the Hillsdale County Five Year Recreation Plan, and

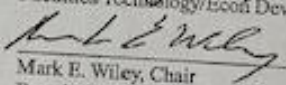
**WHEREAS**, the Hillsdale County Parks Commission has developed the plan as a guideline for improving recreation and enhancing natural resource conservation for Hillsdale County, and

**WHEREAS**, after the public hearing, the Hillsdale County Parks Commission voted to adopt said Hillsdale County Five Year Recreation Plan.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the Hillsdale County Five Year Recreation Plan.

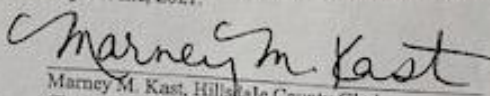
Yeas: Five (5)  
Nays: Zero (0)  
Absent: Zero (0)

  
Doug Ingles, Chair  
Facilities/Technology/Econ Development

  
Mark E. Wiley, Chair  
Board of Commissioners

I, Marney Kast, Clerk to the Board of Commissioners do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and original copy of a resolution adopted by the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners at a Regular Meeting thereof held on the 22nd day of June, 2021.

Seal

  
Marney M. Kast, Hillsdale County Clerk  
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners

RESOLUTION 21-068

June 22, 2021

Approved by the Board of Commissioners  
on June 22, 2021 by

ROLL CALL VOTE:

✓ C/INGLES ✓ C/SCHMITT ✓ C/WILEY  
✓ C/BENZING ✓ C/LEININGER

VOTE: 5 YES 0 NO

As amended to change the wording Hillsdale County Parks Commission to Hillsdale County Parks Trustee Board and to add the following: Effective January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2025 after NOW<  
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners hereby adopts the Hillsdale County Five Year Recreation Plan.



## HILLSDALE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Resolution to include the "Hillsdale County Recreation Plan 2021-2025" as an addendum to the  
"Hillsdale County Master Land Use Plan"

Resolution 2021-001

July 19, 2021

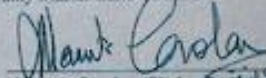
**WHEREAS**, the Hillsdale County Park Trustees has undertaken a planning process to determine the recreation and natural resource conservation needs and desires of its residents during a five year period covering the years 2021-2025, and

**WHEREAS**, the Hillsdale County Recreation Plan was adopted by the Hillsdale County Park Trustees following a public hearing held on June 9, 2021, and

**WHEREAS**, the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners adopted the Hillsdale County Recreation Plan by resolution 21-068 on June 22, 2021, and

**WHEREAS**, a request has been made to the Hillsdale County Planning Commission to include the adopted Hillsdale County Recreation Plan as part of the Hillsdale County Master Land Use Plan.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that as part of the current updating to the Hillsdale County Master Land Use Plan, the Hillsdale County Planning Commission shall include the 'Hillsdale County Recreation Plan 2021-2025' as an addendum to the Hillsdale County Master Land Use Plan.

  
Namrata Carolan, Chair 7-19-2021

Yeas: Namrata Carolan, Aaron Ritter, Doug Ingles, Susan Smith, Andy Welden

Nays: None

Absent: Jack McLain, Troy Reehl



**APPENDIX I:  
COMMUNITY PARK AND RECREATION PLAN CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST**

Michigan Department of Natural Resources-Grants Management  
**COMMUNITY PARK AND RECREATION PLAN  
CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST**

*By Authority of Parts 19, 703 and 716 of Act 451, P.A. 1994, as amended, submission of this information is required for eligibility to apply for grants*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Complete, obtain certification signatures and submit this checklist with a locally adopted recreation plan.

All recreation plans are required to meet the content and local approval standards listed in this checklist and as outlined in the *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park and Recreation Plans* provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Plans must be submitted to the DNR through MiRecGrants with a completed checklist that has been signed by an authorized official(s) of the local unit of government(s) submitting the plan. Plans may be submitted at any time of the year, but no later than February 1 of the year the local unit of government is applying for grants.

**PLAN INFORMATION**

Name of Plan: <i>Hillsdale County 5 Year Recreation Plan</i>		
List the community names (including school districts) that are covered under the plan and have passed a resolution adopting the plan.	County	Month and year plan adopted by the community's governing body
<i>Hillsdale County</i>	<i>Hillsdale</i>	<i>JUNE, 2021</i>

**PLAN CONTENT**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please check each box to certify that the listed information is included in the final plan.

☒ **1. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION**

☒ **2. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

- ☒ Roles of Commission(s) or Advisory Board(s)
- ☒ Department, Authority and/or Staff Description and Organizational Chart
- ☒ Annual and Projected Budgets for Operations, Maintenance, Capital Improvements and Recreation Programming
- ☒ Current Funding Sources
- ☒ Role of Volunteers
- ☒ Relationship(s) with School Districts, Other Public Agencies or Private Organizations
- Regional Authorities or Trailway Commissions Only:**
  - ☐ Description of the Relationship between the Authority or Commission and the Recreation Departments of Participating Communities
  - ☐ Articles of Incorporation

☒ **3. RECREATION INVENTORY**

- ☒ Description of Methods Used to Conduct the Inventory
- ☒ Inventory of all Community Owned Parks and Recreation Facilities
- ☒ Location Maps (site development plans recommended but not required)
- ☒ Accessibility Assessment
- ☒ Status Report for all Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities
- ☐ Waterways Inventory (if applicable)

☒ **4. RESOURCE INVENTORY (OPTIONAL)**

☒ **5. DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS**

**6. DESCRIPTION OF THE PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS**

- ☒ Description of the Method(s) Used to Solicit Public Input Before or During Preparation of the Plan, Including a Copy of the Survey or Meeting Agenda and a Summary of the Responses Received
- ☒ Copy of the Notice of the Availability of the Draft Plan for Public Review and Comment
- Date of the Notice May 3, 2021 & May 17, 2021
- Type of Notice WRITTEN
- Plan Location Hilldale County Road Commission, Hilldale County, Colorado
- Duration of Draft Plan Public Review Period (Must be at Least 30 Days) May 4 through June 9, 2021
- ☒ Copy of the Notice for the Public Meeting Held after the One Month Public Review Period and Before the Plan's Adoption by the Governing Body(ies)
- Date of Notice May 3, 2021 & May 17, 2021
- Name of Newspaper TRIBUNE
- Date of Meeting JUNE 9, 2021
- ☒ Copy of the Minutes from the Public Meeting

**7. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**8. ACTION PROGRAM**

**9. POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT(S)**

**PLAN ADOPTION DOCUMENTATION**

**APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION:** For multi-jurisdictional plans, each local unit of government must pass a resolution adopting the plan. Prepare and attach a separate page for each unit of government included in the plan.

- ☒ 1. Official resolution of adoption by the governing body dated: 6-22-2021
- ☒ 2. Official resolution of the Hilldale City Parks Trustees Commission or Board, recommending adoption of the plan by the governing body, dated: 6-9-2021
- ☒ 3. Copy of letter transmitting adopted plan to County Planning Agency dated: 6-24-2021
- ☒ 4. Copy of letter transmitting adopted plan to Regional Planning Agency dated: 6-24-2021

**OVERALL CERTIFICATION**

**NOTE:** For multi-jurisdictional plans, Overall Certification must include the signature of each local unit of government. Prepare and attach a separate signature page for each unit of government included in the plan.

I hereby certify that the recreation plan for

Hilldale County

(Local Unit of Government)

above and as set forth by the DNR.

includes the required content, as indicated

[Signature]  
Authorized Official for the Local Unit of Government

6/22/21  
Date

**This completed checklist must be uploaded in MiRecGrants.**